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THE
KEATS
CIRCLE

LETTERS AND PAPERS
AND
MORE LETTERS AND POEMS

VOLUME II

THE
KEATS
CIRCLE

LETTERS AND PAPERS
AND
MORE LETTERS AND POEMS
OF THE KEATS CIRCLE

Second Edition
EDITED BY
HYDER EDWARD ROLLINS



VOLUME II

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
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1965

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LETTERS AND PAPERS 1832-1878
Numbers 149-350

GEORGE KEATS TO C. W. DILKE

11 May 1832

Address: Cha^s Dilke Esq^r/ Navy pay office/ London. A short passage is printed by Rollins, *PMLA*, LIX (1944), 208f., and two or three sentences by Forman, IV, 415f., and Adami, p. 134.

My dear Sir

I hear from time to time that you are in existence, and judge of your pursuits, somewhat, from your being the editor of a periodical.¹ I suppose you hear of me occasionally, but not with the same advantage of a clue by which to judge of my pursuits. If you are interested in the matter, read the following lines. I am a busy man of business, having extensive concerns, and responsibilities, with mind, looks and manners generally found with such an one, tempered perhaps a little with the character of a lover of books, who reads in preference to being idle. I trust I shall be able to continue money getting still a few years untill I say—enough—without entirely giving up a taste for those occupations and pleasures, that are the only assurances out of rural life, of a respectable and pleasant old age, and that render one companionable to ones children and Grandchildren in this improving age. I find however that a love of accumulation grows with success in its accomplishment; not to make money when its attainment seems certain, seems, to a man of business like throwing it away, and altho' one may be assured that more and more will not encrease our happiness or contentment, many arguments readily present themselves to satisfy the partial mind, that its pursuit is a duty we owe our children, and

¹ See the letter next following.

those we wish to serve. Whatever effect a few more years search after gain may do, I am not yet quite spoilt, at present I go regularly to my book case for amusement and recreation, and look upon the volumes it contains as my surest Friends. M^r K says I look older in the face than you do, fancy me thin in face, and spare in figure, altho' still active and not indisposed for exertion— I am bald on the organs of benevolence and veneration— cheerful as I always was, & not illhumoured or irritable— I claim of you some account of yourself, and of the circumstances that surround you, in 1836 I shall ask it in person, and shall make all affairs accomodate to my intention of visiting England in that year. Could not you & M^r Dilke visit Louisville, it is now in our power to make you comfortable as long as you may please to sojourn with us, and it shall go hard but I will find time to travel about with you a little. I have thought you will be more happy to see me than any of my old english friends, my steps will assuredly be first directed to you. Do not fear an appearance of egotism when enlarging on yourself, your pursuits, disappointments pleasures, feelings— Do you hear any thing of Severn, I am anxious to have some *painting* of his, for which I desire to pay *well*, he was kind to John, and is the last link of association in my mind with John and life—could you put me in the way of obtaining *one*, what are his circumstances— I dislike Brown, I think with cause— I hope M^r D enjoys better health than formerly, present to her my kind remembrances, and tell her to write me an account of the Reynolds and Llanos— I have just written to the latter, and desire to be rem^d to the former. I cannot help seeing that my Sister neglects me, she never writes but when she requires something of me, she now complains that I have neglected her, and treated her with coldness when she was unprotected, and without a home, inas-much as I did not urge her with sufficient ardour to come to America when she left Abbey, and arrange a plan through you

to bring her out. I did invite her, and proposed to meet her at New York. Could I do more at a time when my circumstances were such as to render such a journey most inconvenient. M^r Llanos complains bitterly of Reynolds, and I fear Reynolds is to blame, and hope he will do justice without the horrors of a law suit, which M^r L. threatens as his only recourse. I have proposed Reynolds to divide with him the loss sustained in consequence of his inattention to his acceptance. I should not have renewed the question but that the money is now of importance to my Sister, who wants [it] for a journey to Spain.² I fear Llanos is doing badly, and has been imposed upon by some of his spanish Friends; I expected such a result from the extravagant hopes expressed by my Sister when writing about the patent.³ Seeming short roads to wealth most frequently terminate in blind alleys. Has he not been too free with the character of spanish royalty to expect a quiet residence in Spain, particularly now that the portuguese war is likely to rouse the Spanish liberals. If you think there is danger in his path oblige me by pointing it out to him.

I am glad to see reform so prosperous in England, but I fear universal suffrage; in this country where we have so much elbow room it is evidently a curse—we are getting blacker and blacker in political villainy, untill all is fair in politics—and all because the ignorant form a majority and can be easily misled by mean, artful, office seeking politicians. You would be astonished to see how shamelessly the press is carried on; lying, slandering blackguarding, changing opinion with every change

² "Llanos appears too to have upset Dilke, Fanny's trustee, by disputing a bill of costs with her solicitors, Rice and Reynolds, the second of whom was a close friend, and Dilke, irritated by this, and by Llanos' commercial folly, had retaliated by placing her marriage settlement funds in the Court of Chancery, and by withdrawing, in some degree, from his position as her confidential adviser" (Adami, p. 134).

³ See I, 330.

of circumstan{ces,} men are followed to the entire neglect of the interests of the country{.} You would hardly suppose that the distribrution of so small a revenue, cou{ld} through the medium of reward, and punishment so entirely buy a people so happily circumstanced as the Americans. Demogoguism is the cause, and universal suffrage is the Demogogues staff. Shake off the Law of Primogeniture, reduce the patronage of the crown, but keep the King, and enact a general system of qualification for voters that shall operate evenly in the three Kingdoms, the qualification to be reduced as the intelligence of the people may encrease. Since I have taken an interest in American politics and written a few articles for the papers on prominent subjects, I am looked upon as a good republican, and in tolerably good odour with my townsmen. Altho' I consider the American republic as the best possible for an intelligent and virtuous people that has no prejudices in favour of other forms, I do not consider the Americans either sufficiently virtuous or intelligent to perpetuate their institutions unimpaired to a very remote posterity. I hope however that the schoolmaster will set all to rights before corruption has sapped the noble structure. Do pray let me hear from you and beleive me

Very truly, your old, and true Friend,

George Keats

Louisville May 11th 1832

➡ 150 ◀

C. W. DILKE TO GEORGE KEATS

12 February 1833

Address: George Keats Esq^{re}/ Louisville/ Kentucky/ North America.¹
Postmarks (one illegible): PAID 10[?] MA 1833. An extract is printed
 by Rollins, *PMLA*, LIX (1944), 209.

Navy Pay Office
 12 Feby 1833

My dear Sir

I have taken up pen & paper resolved to say something even if it be only to subscribe myself yours truly.—In truth I have been so overworked for the last two or three years that I have got into the habit of deferring everything that is not urgent, & thus my friends are neglected.—You have heard it appears that I am Editor of a Periodical ²— This is true enough.— It originated in an after dinner talk— I embarked on the work without forethought, or preparation— I was told that the Athenæum was for sale on Monday, bought it on Sunday, & brought it out on Saturday— The labors of the first twelvemonth almost put me into the grave—my wife says they have added ten years to the heavy score standing against me— Be that as it may, I believe I may now say I have succeeded—and succeeded where so many have failed. The Literary Gazette ³ you will remember

¹ On the back fold George wrote: "9 Grovenor Place or Grosvenor Terrace/ Pimlico/ <near> at the back of old Buckingham house Gardens."

² Sir Charles W. Dilke (*Papers*, I, 24) says that his grandfather was one of several persons who bought the *Athenaeum* in 1828, but that in 1830 his "control over the paper became complete, and in 1832 he and Mr. Holmes [the printer] remained the sole proprietors, Mr. Dilke owning three-fourths." Dilke edited the paper from June, 1830, to May, 1846. For details see L. A. Marchand, *The Athenaeum, A Mirror of Victorian Culture* (1941).

³ Owned by Henry Colburn (see I, 120).

—it is the property of the great publishers, who of course support it with early copies of their books, & their *advertisements*, the great source of profit— A dozen works have been started in opposition to it—one party lost five thousand pounds in the attempt⁴—nothing however could touch it— I have now had the *Athenæum* two years & a half—it has in that time risen *to twelve or thirteen times its prior sale*, & I believe more than doubles the present sale of the *Lit' Gazette*, & even beats it *in advertisements*— The very proprietors of that Paper finding it necessary to send them for their own sakes.—This is good ground of triumph—but I exult more in the fact that I have succeeded in defiance of them—by uncompromising exposure of the old system—by a resolution that threats could not intimidate & promises did not shake—and this too when the loss was enormous & the chances fearfully against me— When I took the Paper & long after the loss was not less than £30 a week! A man may be allowed to boast who refused to compromise under such circumstances, and more than one offer was made by influential Publishers to take a share in the Paper—the consequence of which must have been a sacrifice of principle to *that extent*.— My labors however are now done—it is comparative play— I can command assistance to any extent— If I can get a frank for this to Liverpool I will enclose you a Prospectus issued this year, from which, as it contains testimonials from *all* political parties, you may collect public opinion.—I can hardly suppose that the Paper has ever reached your remote quarters, although two or three American Agents, at New York, announce that they supply it.—If an opportunity ever offers itself I will send you a set, &

⁴ The *Spectator*, published by F. C. Westley and edited by R. S. Rintoul, lost seven or eight thousand pounds in its first two years (1828–1830), according to Sir William B. Thomas, *The Story of the Spectator* (1928), p. 39.

then you will see what *I* have been *doing*, which is a question asked in y^r letter & must serve as an apology for this long egotistical story.—In “the family way” we are doing much the same as when your wife was here—living in the same house, with the same friends about us, although the Athenæum has <brought> subjected us to an occasional onrush of people, whom however I contrive to dispose of at stated intervals, keeping the intermediate time for my old quiet & old friends.—You ask about the existing difference between Reynolds & Llanos. From the first I declined all interference. I do not see how it is possible that Llanos can be wrong, but unfortunately being right does not alter his position, or at all tend to a settlement— I knew too much of Reynolds affairs to intermeddle—they have been long desperate. I should not choose to say so if you were this side the Atlantic— When delay arises from total incapacity to pay money, there is no interference can serve, & as *I had no chance myself*, it would have been ridiculous to intermeddle for others.—You must not return this information to England— The Llanos must be aware of it—but my name would be authority & place me in a position of great difficulty.—As to advising Llanos about Spain, he is unfortunately not the man to take advice or to think he wants it.—I believe him to be a very honorable man, but as weak as a child. There never was any speculation so silly as his patent bits— I was *compelled to tell him so*, because application was made to Rice & myself to lend the trust money—we had three sides of an argumentative letter to prove that as the money was put in trust by your grandmother &c for the benefit of his wife & children & as this speculation was for the benefit of his wife & children we were bound &c & he & *your Sister* were agreed on this, although when the scheme *failed*, the latter said it would have been very wrong & had totally for-

gotten that *she* had ever thought otherwise.⁵—You ask about Severn & wish to have a picture of his— He is still at Rome, although he regularly sends pictures here for the Exhibition, & I should suppose doing reasonably well or he would have returned. I am personally a good deal annoyed with Severn & know no reason why I should hesitate to say so.—When I was in Rome he undertook to get me a picture copied by a German artist at a fixed price named by himself as ample—he, through Brown, subsequently wrote to say he had given the Artist the commission at *double*—subsequently that the Artist was dead & he intended to do it himself for me—again that *it was* done & that he had received the money from Brown, who in consequence drew for the amount on me, & would be sent forthwith—It is now *four years* & I have never heard another word on the subject or seen the picture. Now though the amount was but a few pounds, the whole transaction looks bad— As to Brown I cannot ask him for an explanation, because the correspondence about *your brother's* life has put a stop [to] all communication. I expressed my opinion on the subject with that straightforwardness which our whole life's intimacy justified, & he has in consequence broken off all further correspondence with me.—I regret this because our intimacy & friendship *was of five & thirty years standing*, but I do not upbraid myself.—Poor Rice you will be sorry to hear is dead ⁶—he was the best of all who formed the associates of my early life—the best man indeed I ever knew—his life has been but a long lingering ever since you knew [him], although his good heart & good spirits kept him up.—I suppose by the appearance of the sheet that I must “begin to conclude” although I seem only to have answered questions— In

⁵ Several lines are here heavily canceled. On Llanos' ill-fated bridle-bit patent and his quarrel with Reynolds see Adami, pp. 133-135, Rollins, *PMLA*, LIX, 208f., and I, 330.

⁶ A new fact about Keats's friend. In *Letters*, p. xlviii, we read only that Rice “was not alive at the end of 1833.”

brief then my wife & self & son are well— The Reynolds are well— Marian is married, & has a daughter, but her husband, after waiting ten years <not> that he might not marry till he was prosperous & well to do, has failed in his speculations, & they are about to start a fresh, under I *think* doubtful circumstances. Hood who married Jane is doing pretty well, but like myself not over careful, & therefore I sometimes fear for him—he has the public ear now, but any change would find him unprepared.—The Bawnes are still single & residing with an uncle & cousins in France.—Having now got rid of many prelim[in]ary nothings, either self or wife will write again shortly & with I hope a little pleasanter gossip.—In the mean time we all desire to be remembered to your wife & introduced to your children.—

Yours very truly

CWDilke

»» 151 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO C. W. DILKE

24 November,¹ 14 December 1833

Address: (Single Sheet)/ Cha^s W. Dilke Esq^r/ Navy Pay Office/ Somerset House/ London/ England/ (via New York). *Postmark:* LOUISVILLE KY DEC 21. Brief extracts are printed by Forman, IV, 416f., and Lowell, II, 7.

Louisville November 23rd 1833.

My dear Dilke.

I have not received the letter from yourself or M^{rs} D promised in your's of the 12th Feby. last: ² expecting it I delayed writing, and offer that apology for so tardy an answer. My feelings prompted me to congratulate you immediately on your

¹ Sunday was November 24.

² See the preceding letter.

success with the *Athanæum* and I regret that I did not on the spur of the moment pen my delight at your signal triumph—alas I waited for the promised letter and the demon of procrastination has possessed me untill this melancholy November day (Sunday) the snow falling for the first time this winter, yesterday it was pleasant Autumn or fall as we call it, today it is dreary Winter, and the ground, the trees, the houses wear its livery of white.—I am astonished at your perseverance in a losing concern in such a society as exists in England, where as appears to me ruin is irredeemable; in this country where business, productions, industry, and of course wealth, is ever on the encrease there is no fear that misfortune or accident will *altogether* crush a persevering intelligent man, unless an accumulation of untoward circumstances break his spirit, or drive him to the bottle—many, very many fall victims to the latter, very few to a broken spirit. However you conquered at last, you commanded success by deserving it, and acquired fame and profit at the same time, they are seldom united. I hope you are still successful and that the present and succeeding time will repair the ravages committed on your appearance and constitution caused by former labour and anxiety. I have requested a bookseller here to get the *Athanæ[u]m* for me regularly but he has not yet complied with his promises.—The last two years have sobered me considerably and added more than their fair quota to my wrinkles, what with my baldness and lean[n]ess I am persuaded you <must> look the younger man altho' I must be at least eight years your junior. I am in my 37th year. In consequence of difficulties in the money affairs of the United States (caused entirely by misgover[n]ment) succeeding a long period of uninterrupted prosperity great numbers who fairly considered they were doing well extended their business beyond a reasonable proportion to their capital, suddenly find themselves unable to keep their engagements and of course an immense number of

failures have taken place. Altho' my business continues profitable and I have suffered considerable losses I am still "increasing my store,"³ but am for the most part disagreeably occupied in prosecuting suits at law and compromising accounts with scoundrels who are doing all they can to conceal their property and avoid paying their debts—on the whole I am succeeding well, but my employment has opened to me a blacker page in the volume of human nature than I have hitherto read. Justice is so slow in our court owing to the incompetence of our judge (whose salary is only about £200, quite insufficient to command the best talents) that a suit is the last resort, and you may fancy me talking daily, coolly, calmly and familiarly, or warmly, harshly and angrily, with men who are doing their utmost to cheat and swindle me out of my just claims. If I were sure the same state of things would continue I would give up my excellent business sell out my stock Mills &c and live quietly on my means. I am looking forward to a more pleasant complexion of times and hope that I can safely arrange by taking as a partner a young Englishman⁴ who is now my clerk & who has the confidence of my partner to be able to leave home for a year and visit England, perhaps in 1836. M^r K and our six children viz Georgiana (who is much improved), Emma, Isabel, John, Clarence and Ella 6 mos old a pretty blue eyed Baby) are all in good health and at this present writing within a few feet of me. M^r K has frequent slight bilious attacks, I am tougher and always in good workaday order, notwithstanding a great deal of business anxiety. Give our best wishes and kindest remembrances to M^r D and hopes that she is as cheerful and

³ Compare Shakespeare, sonnet 64, line 8.

⁴ J. F. Clarke (*Athenaeum*, January 4, 1873, p. 18) apparently names this partner as W. G. Bakewell, of Cincinnati. The *Louisville Directory* of 1838 lists Bakewell (see I, cviii) as a director of the Bank of Louisville and of the Portland Dry Dock and Insurance Company. It also names as George's partner Daniel Smith.

happy as usual. I supposed from the on dits reported to me by M^r K that Reynolds was in excellent circumstances, I am sorry to hear to the contrary, altho' it is certainly better that he should fail in his engagements in consequence of want of means than because he is too avaricious to disgorge from a full purse. I thought him strangely negligent of my just demands—he may be even now obtaining money from Abbey on my account, could you ascertain any thing on that subject without disagreeable consequences. It is most likely that he has not honoured my order in favour of M^r Llanos which I very much regret since I feel that when I am living in comparative ease and affluence she should not be needing. The situation of my partnership here renders it extremely important that I should not withdraw money from the concern when it requires the best management to keep unsullied our commercial Credit in these difficult times. A Partner is the last man to be under obligations to, particularly if he should be uneducated and not a business man, such a man is my partner, he is rich in property, careful in his expences, has enough income without his business to support him and of course it is as much as I can do, being of a somewhat liberal spirit to keep even with him in the amount of our respective capitals, if I were to fall behind in that respect I could not perhaps controul the business as I do now— I console myself however with the consideration that I shall probably be in a situation to help her if ever she should need assistance to live, now she says she wants money to travel. It seems almost impossible that the author of so many decent books that treat of character and human nature should be so very deficient in common sagacity as M^r Llanos appears to be, a little friction among our acute Americans would be of service to him— It is much to be regretted that poor Marian Reynolds should have fallen into the breakers of the world when she showed so much prudence by delaying her marriage to avoid the probability of

such a fate. I sincerely hope M^r Green will prove more prosperous in future. She was a favorite with me. Remember me kindly to all the Reynolds. I frequently call to mind that M^{rs} R immediately before I left England in 1818 expressed the utmost astonishment that M^{rs} K was willing to go with me to America, or that her Mother would permit it, it is true she endured many greivous privations in my adverse circumstances, in fact she offered to assist me with her needle, and by her noble behaviour showed me the best side of her character which under uninterrupted good fortune would never have been developed. Altogether we have been as happy as mortals usually are, had M^{rs} Wylie been as wise as M^{rs} R she would have crushed in the bud a reasonable portion of human happiness, and there would not have been any little Keatses. *You* and poor *John* were the only ones who looked upon my American expedition as reasonable and proper, poor John is gone and I greive to say with incorrect impressions of my worthiness, you are still living and I am sure well pleased and gratified that the result has proved so much to my benefit. If I had a starting point I am confident I should have succeeded in England but my position was such that I could not distinguish in what way my exertions could be beneficially applied. I feel anxious in some way to benefit Severn for his great kindness to John, I will try and manage it in future, his behaviour is strange and incomprehensible. I cannot forgive Brown for helping to poison John's mind against me, altho' I feel thankful for his kindness to him I am illiberal enough to suppose he had a selfish motive therein. However if he had the virtue of a Howard ⁵ I could not forgive him for his susp{icion} of my motives in that particular. When I left Hampstead I thought I had a complete copy of "Otho," John took some pa{ins} to get the sheets together, copied what was deficient and m{ade} the whole, as he said perfect, when I arrived home

⁵ John Howard (1726?-1790), philanthropist and prison reformer.

I found many sheets missing, I suspected Brown had abstracted {them.} I may not perhaps do him justice, I may be meetin{g out the} same measure to him that he metted to me,⁶ and regret that any cause should have occurred to sever so long a friendship between you. Dec^r 14th Do you hear any thing of Haslam— Poor Rice is gone, he was indeed a noble fellow. I beleive I must retract the above severity against Brown, since writing it, I have been looking over John's correspondence, in which he dwells so much on his kindness that I must perforce acquit, and *try* to like him. Has any one got a complete copy of John's unpublished works? I suppose I must suspend my curiosity untill I can cross the broad Atlantic.—Altho' theory and my prejudices lead me to be a reformer, I fear that the rapid strides now making in England towards republicanism will be fatal to the sort of happiness and greatness she has hitherto enjoyed changing it for an inferior condition of more turmoil and less contentment. Here the *universal corruption* and want of common honesty in all that relates to politics is so rapidly diffusing thro' the community, that it is becoming superfluous for roguery to put on the semblance of virtue. Party has put a man in a responsible office in this place who a few years since would have been condemned to the penitentiary but for the favour of a brother free mason who was a juror, and who would not agree with the other eleven in finding a verdict, a brother of this same office holder robbed a bank of which party made him a director was this year elected as representative to the Kentucky Legislature.—It is now common throughout the United States to talk of the impossibility of a long continuance of the Union, untill within these three years it would not have been safe to utter such a sentiment. Jefferson was called the great apostle of liberty during his political life, he is now looked upon by half the Union as the great apostle of demagoguism, he pointed out

⁶ Matthew 7:2, Mark 4:24.

the way to obtain power by unworthy means, but having for the most ⁷ part used it skillfully, the mean[n]ess he employed to get it was overlooked, now low unprincipled scoundrels have practised and improved upon his lessons, have got possession of the purse and patronage of the nation and are using them to perpetuate their power and to fill their purses unmindful of all honour or love of country. I say they for I am inclined to believe the President is a mere tool in their hands, they have to flatter his very strong and stupid prejudices, punish his enemies reward his friends and flatterers and for the rest he gives them *carte blanche*. He has proved how much more powerful a mob President is, than a Monarch limited by a constitution, and not elective. Unless the intelligent part of the community will come forward with *money*, to be used freely at elections, I firmly believe that the patronage of the government will prove sufficient to keep any party in power that will use it on the proscriptive principle now in fashion. I have formerly thought that the redeeming power of frequent elections would set all to rights, since Jackson was reelected with such a load of crying sins on his head I have given up all such hopes. The great fault of the really patriotic men who framed the constitution was, that they presumed that the american people would always elect an intelligent and honourable man for President, they gave him power on this fatal presumption, with the feeling that he was responsible to the People, never thinking that it is the people that make the worst tyrants, or if they did think so, that the *American people* were superior to all other *people*. All the usurpations of Gen^l Jackson were foreseen, and discussed, but not provided against, expressly on the ground that no such acts could be fairly supposed to be done by any one who would be chosen by the American people as their cheif magistrate, it is so far a misfortune that they had such a man as Washington to fill

⁷ *Written most most.*

the chair, his virtues blinded them to the future. It is evident that the present race of Americans is inferior in honesty and patriotism to the race that accomplished the revolution, and the rising generation bids fair to degenerate still further. It has been observed that young politicians in all countries are disposed to be honest and patriotic, here they are the most subservient tools. I dare say you are glad I have so little room, for if I had you should have a good deal more politics. Hamilton's book ⁸ is the best that has been written on America, and may be relied on if you can allow for the prejudices of a man who has not been accustomed to live in a country where the facility of getting a living is such that for the most part the worthy and industrious of the lower classes avoid domestic servitude, and of course where the rich cannot obtain at any cost in perfection the Luxury of being well waited on. Altho there is plenty of servility in society, there is very little from servants to those they serve. If he had brought down the politics of the Union to the present time he would have added a chapter that would have startled those english republicans who point out America as an example of good government. While I am on the subject of an English Tourist I will remark that altho' most of the stories that are told by Hamilton, Trollope ⁹ Hall ¹⁰ &c &c imputing vulgarity &c to the Americans are probably true, that I presume any traveller in search of the vulgar might collect facts and describe character as much to the disadvantage of any nation in Europe, I don't like John Bull judged by an unfair standard and think that Brother Jonathan ought to have fair play. Write to me

⁸ Thomas Hamilton (1789-1842), *Men and Manners in America* (Edinburgh and Philadelphia, 1833).

⁹ Frances Milton Trollope (1780-1863), *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London and New York, 1832).

¹⁰ Basil Hall (1788-1844), *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828* (Edinburgh, London, and Philadelphia, 1829).

soon and if you can say that this long epistle has not wearied you I shall be well pleased. I sincerely hope I shall be able to see you in 1836 when we may perhaps look over John's papers together— My best wishes to M^{rs} Dilke and yourself in which M^{rs} K cordially joins.

Your old Friend

Geo. Keats

»» 152 ««

J. W. DALBY TO GEORGE JAMES DE WILDE ¹

2, 11 January 1836

* * *

I took with me your exquisite portrait of Keats, and was charmed with the interest which it excited. It happened ap-
positely enough that M^r Addison had been reading of him aloud
(his custom always of an evening) the night before, in "Willis's
Pencillings." ² M^{rs} Addison observed that the portrait was in

¹ A fragment of a journal letter, four pages numbered 3-6. Only the passages dealing with Keats and Hunt are printed here; part of them were printed by Rollins, *University of Colorado Studies*, Series B, II (1945), 299.

Dalby was a poet, editor, and friend of Leigh Hunt. Many poems and other contributions by him were published in the first two volumes (1819, 1820) of the *London Literary Chronicle*; in J. Limbird's *Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review*, as in 1821, pp. 29, 63, 174, 254, 348f., 361f., 445, 477, 492, and so on; and in *Leigh Hunt's London Journal*, 1835; while he was a regular and De Wilde an occasional contributor to the first five volumes (1821-1824) of *The Drama; Or, Theatrical Pocket Magazine*. De Wilde (1804-1871)—the son of Samuel De Wilde (1748-1832), a portrait painter closely associated with Hunt and the Cowden Clarkes—afterwards edited the *Northampton Mercury*. His portrait of Keats is not mentioned by Williamson.

² N. P. Willis, *Pencillings by the Way* (1835), pp. 195-204, discusses Shelley and Keats sympathetically.

admirable taste, & one of the sisters (my back being turned, I know not which,) said that, "there was all the poet in it: & that had he never written a line the portrait would betoken what poetry was in him." Miss Lucy subsequently said that, "there could be no possibility of disputing the likeness; with or without knowledge of the original one must *feel* its fidelity." [So now proceed with the Leigh Hunt, & increase a thousand-fold all the obligations I owe you: I will not frame Keats until I have his friend—which I venture to hope will be when I see you.]³ Our conversation (how I wished that you had been a sharer in it!]⁴ was of Art & Artists—plays, playhouses, & players. Miss Adams' (the elder's) theatrical idol was Kean, of whom she speaks with enthusiasm. She had, however, recently seen Charles Kemble's *Macbeth*, & she says it surprised her: she had not been to the theatre for a considerable period, & the tragedy so affected her that she did not quite recover the effects of it for several days. M^{rs} W. West played Lady Macbeth,⁵ & "looked almost too young for the character!"—I brought away a copy of "the Elegant Girl," a work of pictures & poetry, the first supplied by Miss Lucy when a mere girl, the latter written by the mother whom she so bitterly & ceaselessly laments.

Now, with respect to the christening of the picture, can you not help us? They want to avoid the common-place: would the motto (for which, I believe, I am indebted to you) do as a title for it?

Here, before I forget it, I will copy a sonnet inspired by the portrait of Keats, but by no means doing it justice:

³ Bracketed in the original.

⁴ Bracketed in the original.

⁵ For Charles Kemble (1775–1854) as *Macbeth* (1840) see Lillian A. Hall, *Catalogue of Dramatic Portraits*, II (1931), 382; for Sarah Cooke West (1790–1876) see the same, IV (1934), 252f. They acted *Macbeth* at Covent Garden on December 16, 1835.

 Sonnet

on receiving a Portrait of John Keats,
from George James DeWilde.

Aye, by the brow of power—the fervent eye—
The sensitive mouth—by the whole face divine,
'Tis the young breather of the immortal line,
The inheritor of truest minstrelsy,—
The Bard who sang too well so soon to die;
He whose o'erflowing fancy richly moulded
ENDYMION, and, with loftier powers unfolded,
Painted HYPERION's forlorn majesty.

Brief years, but glorious labours, and undying,—
Solace which this divinest creature breathed
To silence our sad plaints and useless sighing.
O, lost one! love-embalmed & laurel-wreathed;
What thousands seek thy dust, with SHELLEY's lying,
Led by the spell of songs ye both bequeathed. . . .

Jan^{ry} 2^d 1836.

Jan^{ry} 11th

I am in alarm about the London Journal. The last number which I received—a Single N^o, Containing only Index & Title page, & Supplement to Printing Machine,—occasioned me some forebodings; & yesterday I received none at all. Is it over? Is “our weekly source of comfort,” as A. D. calls it, cut off? I very much fear so; it has attained almost the usual age of Leigh Hunt's bantlings; & I always feared (tho' to *some* parties, I would never betray the fear) that it would not exceed them in longevity. I hope his health is not failing him entirely; yet the slow progress of the “Journey by Coach,” an article which, if he

were capable of writing at all, he would surely write *con amore*, & with facility, looks painfully like it.⁶ Has he quarrelled with Knight,⁷ who had the meanness to boast to G. H. D.⁸ that, "he had been keeping Leigh Hunt for years": a boast which I think very suspicious; & which, in itself, would go far to make me imagine that M^r Knight, like *every other tradesman*, doesn't mind a little lying. I hope, however, that I am dealing in unfounded apprehensions; & that he will journalize, & delight us, for years to come. . . .

➤➤ 153 ◀◀

GEORGE KEATS TO C. W. DILKE

14 March, 8 October 1836

Address: Cha^s Dilke Esq^{re}/ Navy Pay Office/ Sommerset House/ London.
A brief extract is printed by Forman, IV, 417f.

Louisville March 14th 1836.

My dear Dilke

I wrote to you in May 1832 and received your answer dated Feb^y 1833, and I wrote again in Nov. 1833 since which I have not heard from or of you— It is now 1836 the year that I have for many years back proposed to devote to old England, circumstances that I could not control have prevented me from "setting my house in order"¹ and altho' I have not quite lost

⁶ "A Journey by Coach" appears in *Leigh Hunt's London Journal*, November 14, 21, 28, December 12, 1835, pp. 393f., 401f., 409f., 433f. The periodical ended on December 31 with a title page, an index, and the *Monthly Supplement to Leigh Hunt's London Journal*. Meanwhile, Dalby had published a letter commending *Leigh Hunt's London Journal* in the issue for March 18, 1835, p. 82, and a poem praising it in the issue of April 22, p. 124.

⁷ Charles Knight (1791–1873), publisher of Hunt's journal.

⁸ Probably George Henry Davidson, printer.

¹ Isaiah 38:1.

all hope of setting my foot in England within the year, I fear I shall be obliged to defer my visit until 1837. My mind has become uneasy lest my "time should come" before I have done my duty in publishing a biography of John worthy of him, and either a complete edition of his works, or at least such as have not been already published. I wish to manage so as to perform this duty with the shortest possible absence from home. I cannot do it as it should be done without your advice and assistance; I *beleive* that it will afford you much pleasure to be instrumental in accomplishing such an object, and I *hope* you still have that kindly feeling towards me, that will induce you to think ahead for me so far as to save me as much time as possible, *beleiving* and sanguinely *hoping* this, need I make any apology for claiming so much of your attention? I am not able to write such a biography as should be written, I have not made any notes for one, I depend upon my memory for early incidents and upon a selection from John's correspondence to make the biography interesting. If neither of his early and talented friends will undertake the work, I am anxious to assist and remunerate any man of taste and talent who will. The slow exchange of letters would create so much delay that I enter into some particulars with the view of setting the business afloat immediately, should you be willing to assist, and have the time to devote to it. Will Taylor give up, or sell the poems he advertized for publication? I presume that set of manuscripts will contain all the poems he thought worthy of publication. You know that he advanced John £150 on them, which 150£ I have paid. I am however willing to buy them of him if he is so mean as to require it. I have an imperfect copy of *Otho* much of it the original composition, Brown has a perfect copy, and has I *beleive* some ownership right to it, perhaps one half, will he furnish a copy, or sell his interest? Unless these Gentlemen will

facilitate the operation there will be considerable difficulty in collecting the materials.

Had I better publish a complete edition of all John's works or a selection of the best of those published and unpublished, or only the latter? Do I pray you *think out* this to me most important affair. It is useless for *me* to dwell on the minutia of this undertaking to *you* who will at a glance see more into it, than I have been able to imagine after years of study. At what season had I better be in London. Give me some idea of the cost of collecting materials, writing biography and the terms on which the work can be published in handsome style, the publisher to keep the whole impression; I take it as a matter of course that the sale would not pay expences, at what sum would a publisher risk the publication?—

How is M^r D. and your brother, and Charles? I have completed a dwelling house ² and shall move into it in five or six weeks, it is large enough for my numerous family, and a good bed room to spare, it is possible that you and M^r Dilke can come out and stop with us until I can return with you, or will you come out with me when I return—and make my house your home so long as you please— Are you still in the Navy pay office? M^r K says you anticipated a change—a reduction of officers there, that you might possibly be one of the reduced, I was glad to see your last letter dated “Navy pay office.” ³ I am getting balder and I suppose I am in the course of nature gradually wearing away but I feel vigorous and enjoy uninterrupted health. Every additional child shakes M^r Keats constitution a little, still altho' she is not so healthy as formerly she cannot

² The “Englishman's Palace” stood on Walnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Paul Nafe, in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, April 25, 1943 (section 3, p. 9), gives a picture of the house as it looked when it was sold in 1924 for \$166,000.

³ The Navy Pay Office was abolished in 1836, and Dilke retired on a pension.

complain on that score, and she has a good flow of spirits is young in her feelings and fond of gaiety and cheerful amusement. We have now seven children, Georgiana who has left off going to School but is studying French and music, Emma, Isabel John, Clarence who all go to school, next Ella and an infant 2 months old Alice. five Girls and two boys.

October 8. 1836.

Bank

At the time I wrote the preceding I was applied to by the *B* of Ky and afterwards by the Governor ⁴ and the Corporation of L^{la} to undertake the commission to sell a large amount of Scrip in London belonging to the respective parties. I was for 2 mos in daily expectation of starting for London and therefore did not send this letter, various circumstances have crea{ted} delays until the price of the securities is so fallen as to induce all parties to wait for a more favorable time, only at present making occasional efforts at the Eastern Cities. I send this in a packet to Alex Gordon of the firm of F. De Lizardi & C^o of London,⁵ with whom I am well acquainted, with a request that he will send a messenger to deliver it to you. I hear through M^r Holley the

⁴ James Clark, governor 1836-1840.

⁵ George Keats wrote to Henry Wylie, November 26, 1836 (Williamson, pp. 90f.), complaining that he had not heard from Dilke in over two years, and adding, "I wrote to him recently through Mr. Gordon of the firm of F. De Lizardi & Co. of London with directions to send my Letter by special messenger." (De Lizardi and Company were merchants at 4 Barge Yard, Bucklersbury.) Wylie wrote to Dilke on February 15, 1837, enclosing George's complaint, and saying that the latter's friend H. W. Cood (the *Louisville Directory*, 1838, lists him as a member of the firm of Smith and Keats) would be glad to carry a message when he sailed from Liverpool on March 16. Even then, Dilke failed to reply until George had written again (see No. 156) on March 1, 1838. On Gordon see II, 29. Naomi J. Kirk, *Filson Club History Quarterly*, April, 1934 (VIII, 94), by the way, says that most of George Keats's furniture was sold after his death to Cood, and inquires, "Was Mr. Cood a friend of the family, and did he bid in the furniture for the widow?"

author of "Texas"⁶ that a Mr Kenneday is now the Editor of the Atheneum.⁷ My hearty good wishes to you and your Lady—I hope the steam Ships now building will bring Louisville and London within 20 days of each other.

I pray you write to me who am

Your sincere Friend

Geo Keats.

➡ 154 ◀

CHARLES BROWN TO LEIGH HUNT

21 December 1836

Laira Green, near Plymouth.

21st Dec^r 1836.

My dear Hunt,

After a long silence on both sides, when a letter does come, there is generally something particular in it. Be patient,—you will come to it presently. Many a resolution and many an attempt have I made to write a life of our Keats, but the pain as often made me defer it. Still I felt it a duty; and, last summer, when the card of winter lectures was to be printed at our Literary Institution, of which I am a member, I boldly put my name down for a "Life of Keats" on 29th Dec^r.¹ Thus I compelled myself, in spite of pain, to fulfil my duty. So, to-morrow week, in the evening, from seven to ten o'Clock, you may imagine me reading my paper to about a hundred gentlemen, explaining any question I may be asked, or discussing his merits as a poet,

⁶ Mary Austin Holley's *Texas* was published in Baltimore, 1833. Another edition appeared at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1836.

⁷ See II, 34.

¹ Brown wrote to Severn on November 26 (Sharp, pp. 178f.) that his lecture was announced for December 27, but the date he mentions here is the one on which he delivered it.

or reading his posthumous poems. Afterwards it will be published, though in what work, or by itself, I am yet in doubt. Now I am unwilling to do this without first acquainting you. There may be something you may wish were introduced, of which I am ignorant. Mine is a most plain unvarnished tale,^{1a} and rather short. None of his living friends are mentioned by name except yourself and Severn. Indeed I feel so cautious about mentioning the living, that I prefer telling you beforehand, and subject to correction, what I have said of you. In the first place you are mentioned, without comment, as having been the first to notice his poetry, which you did in the Examiner; then, when I left him to go to the Highlands a second time, I say,—“It was his choice, during my absence, to lodge at Kentish Town, that he might be near his friend, Leigh Hunt, in whose companionship he was ever happy.” After this, I speak of your kindness in a word; and in a letter of his, there is another word to the same effect.² To tell the truth, this does not quite satisfy me; but I had fallen into a most unadorned and matter of fact style, oppressed, all the while, by a head-ache,—uncommon for me—or I was crying like a child. Then, I have thought, the more simple the more powerful are the words. One thing I think of doing, and I will do it, unless you object to it; the introduction of your letter to Severn, when we feared Keats was dying; it arrived too late; Severn showed it to me, and I was so touched by it, that I took a copy.³ There was a letter from Shelley, inviting him to Pisa; you begged it from me, and you had it; can you send me a copy of that?⁴ Are there any letters from him to you, which you wish to be published? I open the life with my favourite passage in “Adonais.” I know

^{1a} *Othello*, I.iii.90.

² See II, 56f., 74, 78.

³ This beautiful letter of March 8, 1821, was printed by Milnes, II, 95-97, by Sharp, pp. 86f., and by Forman, IV, 220-222. Evidently Hunt requested Brown not to use it.

⁴ See No. 57.

not what the London Bookseller's answer may be, but I am anxious to get it off my mind; so, do not you delay letting me know what you like, or what you dislike, or sending me copies of letters,—otherwise you may chance to be too late.

* * *

➡ 155 ⬅

GEORGE KEATS TO L. J. CIST¹

18 June 1837

Address: Lewis J. Cist Esq^r/ Cincinnati/ Ohio. *Postmark:* LOUISVILLE KY. JUN 20.

Lewis J. Cist Esq^r

Cincinnati

Dear Sir

It affords me much gratification to beleive that my brother's genius is becoming more and more highly appreciated—in fact I feel a sort of gratitude towards those who fairly estimate talents, that were almost slighted by the public at a time when encouragement might have prolonged the life of a Poet, who had he lived 20 years longer would in my opinion <would> have so enriched english literature, as to have caused his name to be associated by posterity with its greatest. I have numerous manuscripts, and letters with poems published and unpublished, inserted in corners and crosswritten in such wise, that they cannot be detached without mutilation. The auto-

¹ For the biography and poems of Cist, a Cincinnati bank clerk, see W. T. Coggeshall, *The Poets and Poetry of the West* (1860), pp. 337-342. Cist died in 1885, leaving a fine autograph collection which was sold in New York during 1886-1887. Lot 2856 was the letter here printed.

graph enclosed is cut from a letter addressed to my Wife's Mother in 1819.²

Very resp^r.

Your ob^t S^t

Geo. Keats

Louisville June 18. 1837.

»» 156 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO C. W. DILKE

1 March 1838

Address: Cha^s Wentworth Dilke Sen^r/ N^o 9 Grosvenor Terrace/ near Buckingham Gate. Pimlico/ London./ per favor of Doctor Flint. A brief extract is printed by Forman, IV, 418f.

Louisville March 1. 1838.

My dear Dilke.

Not having received answers from several letters sent by the post, and one through M^r Gordon,¹ I despair [of] hearing from you again without catching you in a trap, which I have set for you.

My friend professor Flint visits England for the purpose of buying books and apparatus for the medical Institute of Louisville,² and will I am sure take the trouble to convey to you this letter in person if you are in London, and request of you an answer to bring back to me. Knowing the interest you take in our experimental government, I am sure you will be

² No letter of this date to Mrs. Wylie is given in *Letters*.

¹ See II, 25.

² The Louisville Medical Institute was authorized by the city council on April 3, 1837. Joshua Barker Flint, an 1825 graduate of the Harvard Medical School, held the chair of surgery from 1837 to 1840 and from 1857 to 1863, when he died. See *A Centennial History of the University of Louisville* (1939), p. 41.

rewarded for any time you may spend upon him in learning about this "freest people in the Universe." He is sensible and unaffected, and stands high in his profession as a surgeon. He is a massachuset's man, and is new enough to the west to distinguish wherein we of the west are peculiar in manners, customs, habits of thought &c I say we, for I am now a Kentuckian as far as any one can be made one in a commercial City. I have no doubt if you ever see me again (which I sincerely and fervently hope will happen some day) you will witness in my conversation and habits, many evidences of my western education. I received a number of the *Atheneum*,³ and observed the notice "that G. K of Louisville should be attended to." I have reflected a great deal about publishing the life, and works of my brother, but not having the slightest idea what quantity or description of materials can be got in the shape of letters, posthumous poems &c whether "Otho" can be obtained from Brown, and whether a competent writer among his old friends will undertake the work, I am altogether at a loss what to calculate on. It is true I have in John's letters to Tom, and myself got a considerable fund of most excellent and interesting matter, but they must be weeded, much more could undoubtedly be obtained that would form a book worthy of him.

If I should come to England, I could not remain there long enough to collect, assort, arrange, and publish, and besides I am entirely incompetent, wanting talent and experience in such matters. I expected from your kindness all information and counsel, and have less hope of accomplishing the object than when the duty first pressed itself on my mind, inasmuch as your almost complete silence causes me to fear that you will not give the assistance I hoped for. Who else am I to look to for advice and sympathy? Perhaps the world uses you as it does

³ In "To Correspondents," January 28, 1837, p. 68: "G. K., of Louisville, received, and shall be attended to."

me, every year adds to my troubles, I am more and more occupied by its claims on my time, my thoughts and exertions. I sometimes think however that in England the comparatively greater steadfastness of the government, and stability of the laws, must leave an individual less liable to be buffeted by the surgings of society than in this fluctuating country. In America it is hard for any man to keep out of the vortex created by the evervarying policy of the government, no amount of prudence and caution can altogether ensure a man of business who has to earn a living, from being mixed up in the general tumult. I am considered a prudent man, and have been considered a successful one, but I have never been in really easy circumstances, there is always something ahead that bears a threatening aspect. The spirit of the community in cities is opposed to economy, and my disposition to save not being strong enough to resist the general impulse, I go with the crowd, and in my endeavours to obtain sufficient means I am thrown with the rest too near the middle of the stream, to secure a safe and convenient landing place, so as to be able to command my time and thoughts. I hoped to have been able to visit you in 1836, but the troubles of business then, and the confusion since caused by the mal-administration of the government, have compelled me to be near home to paddle my own canoe. Don't receive as gospel Dr Flint's opinions of Jackson, and his policy or no policy, hear the tale on the other side before you form a judgement, I hope to tell it you myself if you have patience to listen to a tale of such miserable fooling, corruption, and wickedness.

If it were possible for me to leave my business, I might accept an appointment which has been suggested to me to negotiate a loan in London for the City of Louisville, and perhaps for the State & B⁴ of Kentucky.

M^{rs} Keats desires her kind rem^s to you and M^{rs} D. she

⁴ Bank. See II, 25.

enjoys generally good health, but is now very poorly, recovering from a severe attack of enflamatory rheumatism— Our seven children are well altogether we have not much to complain of on the score of sickness for 10 years back. With best wishes for the welfare and happiness of yourself and M^r Dilke I remain

Your sincere Friend

Geo Keats.

I have not heard any thing of Fanny since she left London for Spain, I have been putting off endeavouring to learn about her until I could come to England, I feel most anxious to hear of her fortunes. Tell me if you have heard of her since she left London.

G. K.

» 157 «

C. W. DILKE TO GEORGE KEATS

September 1838

Address: Geo Keats Esq^r/ p^r favor of D^r Flint. The second paragraph is quoted by Rollins, *PMLA*, LIX (1944), 210.

L^r Grosvenor Place—Sept^r

My dear Sir

It seems ridiculous to talk of a want of leisure when I have had days & nights & weeks & months to prepare this letter ¹— Yet such is the fact— Every week there is a new publication & 'the whirligig of time' ² brings round its superabundant labor.—It is now twelve oclock on Friday night & y^r friend D^r Flint departs tomorrow morning.—I have directed a special messenger to be here that I may have a chance of this reaching

¹ A tardy reply to Nos. 153 and 156.

² *Twelfth Night*, V.i.385.

him— To the direct business then of y^r last— Brown & myself have never been friends since the discussions of which I sometime since <favored> apprised you—& our formal civility terminated lately because we did not flatter him about a silly book ³ which he was pleased to publish. He professed however prior to this disagreement that he would give up copies of all the Poems he possessed, reserving to himself a right to publish such as he considered necessary should he chuse to write the Life of y^r Brother— This seemed reasonable & I said so. Taylor too, on the application of a mutual friend expressed himself in general terms of civility & as willing to do any thing in reason. On this I submitted distinct propositions— Would he consent to publish a complete edition of such works as an Editor (say John Reynolds,) should think advisable with a Life & Portrait, you furnishing all the material for the Life in y^r power, in handsome style, & if so on what terms—for the profits paying Editor &c &c or for a specific sum— If so what sum— If not what would he take for copyrights &c His reply was that it would require calculations but I have never received an answer.—Still I think the thing may 'progress' & therefore if you desire me to proceed with the negotiation it may be as well to give me some idea of the limit of expense you would chuse to go to.—This I believe is the substance of all that has taken place & brings down the hist^y to the present moment—

Now of y^r Sister— She & her husband & family are still in Spain— He made a jump at fortune sometime since & was Sec^y to Mendizabel the Minister ⁴— The Minister fell & of course the Sec^y. From what I collect I conclude that he is well enough off although like most ex-ministers & ex secretaries he is not on{ly

³ *Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems* (1838), reviewed in the *Athenaeum*, July 21, 1838, pp. 508-510.

⁴ Juan Alvarez y Mendizabal (1790-1853), prime minister to Maria Christina, September, 1835-May, 1836.

out} of place but out of humour— They do say, but no doubt *that* is a party libel that his brother, whom he got appointed Commiss' Genl, has made a good deal of money— I only hope Llianos secured a portion—a per centage— As however I am y^r Sister's Trustee I infer that money matters are not very urgent, as he draws at *wide* intervals only for her dividends.—

As to me & mine we are just now somewhat out of spirits. My poor wife has been ill for months, & last week so bad as to be in great danger— She is now much better & we hope soon to be off into the country & fresh air & quiet will I hope effect a perfect recovery. Wentworth & self are well. Your friend M^r Somebody from Texas was a little misinformed about M^r Kennedy ⁵ being Editor of the Athenæum— No such person is or ever was. The weight still rest[s] on my shoul{ders.} I should not be very sorry to be relieved of it, but as it goes on prosperously I must not complain.—

I hope to write again & more fully the moment I have a little more leisure— In the meantime Believe me Vy—truly Yours
CWDilke

Best remembrances to M^r Keats—and best good wishes to the young who are dear to you though unknown to me.—⁶

⁵ For Mrs. Holley and Kennedy see II, 25f.

⁶ This sentence is written at the foot of the outside page (inverted).

» 158 «

GEORGE KEATS TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE ¹

10 August 1839

Address: to be forwarded if Rev^d J. F. Clarke has/ left Meadville./ Rev^d Jas F. Clarke/ care of Mr Huidekoper/ Meadville/ Pensylvania. *Postmark:* LOUISVILLE KY. AUG 10. Printed by Madeleine B. Stern (S), PMLA, LVI (1941), 209.

Louisville August 10th 1839

My dear Sir

I am informed that you have made arrangements to commence housekeeping immediately on your return, and believing that one or two weeks will be necessary to enable you to put your new domicile in order, I take pleasure in asking you and your Lady to spend that time at my house, in which request M^{rs} Keats most heartily joins; we desire our respects to M^{rs} C and wish you very many happy returns of your wedding day.

The election has been very warmly contested involving an unusual portion of drunkenness, fighting, foul voting and buying of votes— Graves ² is elected by a majority of 300—

¹ Harvard also has a transcript of the letter made in 1935 by Louis A. Holman. Clarke, Harvard graduate (A.B., 1829, B.D., 1833) and Transcendentalist, was the pastor of the Unitarian Church at Louisville, Kentucky, from August 8, 1833, to June 16, 1840 (J. S. Johnston, *Memorial History of Louisville* [n.d.], II, 252f.). There he edited the *Western Messenger* from April, 1836, to October, 1839, and became a close friend of the George Keats family. He married Anna Huidekoper, of Meadville, Pennsylvania, August, 1839, and on January 18, 1841, returned to Boston to become minister of the Church of the Disciples till 1849 and, again, in 1854. He was a voluminous author. A biography of him was published by E. E. Hale in 1891.

² "William J. Graves, the Whig Congressman from Henry, who, in February, 1838, had slain Jonathan Cilley, Hawthorne's classmate, in a political duel. Graves was Congressman from the Louisville district 1835-41" (S).

Guthrie³ by 116—and Read⁴ and Butler,⁵ the former by a large majority the latter by a small one. I am

With much regard

Your Friend

Geo Keats.

»» 159 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO ANNA BARKER¹

15 November 1839

Address: Miss A Barker.

dear Madam.

Since you felt interest enough for the memory of my Brother to gather flowers that "grew over him,"² and to pre-

³ "James Guthrie, President of the Bank of Kentucky for one month in 1840, Democratic leader and member of the Legislature in 1827-8-9; elected Councilman in 1839" (S).

⁴ S has Reed, on which she comments: "Possibly an error. James Rudd was elected Councilman in 1839."

⁵ "Rezin E. Butler was Councilman in 1840" (S).

¹ Miss Barker, of New Orleans, visited Louisville in November, 1839, and was introduced to George by James Freeman Clarke. (She married Samuel Gray Ward, of Boston, on October 3, 1840.) Writing to his daughter Emma (the letter is printed in the *New York World*, June 25, 1877, p. 3, under the incorrect date of January, 1839), George tells of calling on her: "I found her all you described her, and wish much to see more of her. My short interview with her unfolded so much that was pleasing in her character that I remember her as a happy dream, in which the events of years pass vividly through the mind in a few minutes. It is an agreeable incident in one's life to have had such a vision. . . . She gave me a flower gathered from the grave of your uncle John, one of those flowers which the poor fellow anticipated 'would grow over him!' I was induced to present her with the original manuscript of the 'Ode to Autumn,' by learning that she had gathered flowers there and still treasured them." From a granddaughter her autograph manuscript of "To Autumn" passed, via Lowell, to Harvard. See *Ward Family Papers* (Boston, 1900) and *Keats' Reputation*, p. 51.

² Compare I, 224, 238f.

serve them, I am persuaded you will value highly and treasure carefully the enclosed *original* manuscript of one of his most pleasing poems, of which I beg your acceptance.

I am With much respect

Your ob^t Servant

Geo Keats.

Louisville Nov 15. 1839.

➤➤ 160 ◀◀

CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

18 October 1840

Address: Richard M. Milnes Esq^{re}/ M. P./ Pontefract,/ Yorkshire. *Postmarks:* PLYMOUTH OC 18 PY POST; B 20 OC 20 1840; *Crabtree Penny Post.*

Laira Green, near Plymouth.

19¹ October 1840.

My dear Sir,

I have taken a fancy to rewrite my old Journals of tours to the Highlands, when I set out accompanied by Keats. They are printed, week after week, in a Plymouth Newspaper.² The next Chapter will contain a ballad³ by Keats, written on the road, the first I have introduced, and, as I think you will like it, and like to have it, I will order it to be forwarded to you.

Possibly, or rather probably, you have not any of his hand-writing. I know you will thank me for the inclosure—a rough writing of part of his "Lamia" as it was composed. I have nothing but fragments, as most of the originals were scrambled

¹ An error: see the postmarks.

² Colvin, p. 273n., refers to four issues, October 1, 8, 15, 22, of the *Plymouth and Devonport Weekly Journal*.

³ "Old Meg she was a Gipsy."

away to America by his brother, after I had made copies of them for the press.

My best respects to your family.

Your's most sincerely,

Cha^a Brown.

»» 161 ««

CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

25 October 1840

Laira Green, Plymouth.

25 Oct^r 1840.

My dear Sir,

It must appear extremely ridiculous that a few days after I had informed you of my "Walks in the North," interspersed with the posthumous minor poems of Keats, they should be discontinued. They were avowedly doing service to the Paper, and I furnished them without fee or reward; but the proprietor is an impracticable pig-headed man, most gracious and thankful at the offer, till, at the end of a month, when he calculated I had committed myself for the whole series, he turned round upon me, as if I were his shoe-black. To his astonishment, in spite of repentant entreaty, he finds he will have no more. They may appear in another Newspaper; in that event, the proprietor will be glad to put down your name as a subscriber for the time.

You ask of me what I am so desirous to give!—a Life¹ of my dear Keats, with all his unpublished poems. As a matter of trade, London booksellers have told me it would prove a most losing speculation, that no one buys poetry and lives of poets, and that very few indeed read any thing but Newspapers. There is, I dare say, much truth in this, and tradesmen are not

¹ Printed as No. 166.

to be blamed for following their own interest. But after receiving your letter yesterday morning, I thought of the hint [?] of Newspapers, and wrote to the "Morning Chronicle," asking the Editor if he were inclined to publish a column or two at a time of Keats's life, with, at least, his *minor* posthumous poems. Both you and I may call this *infra dig*; but we must seize on the public ear as we can. I almost expect to receive a "not available" answer, or, haply, none at all. The *Life is written*; and with great pain—more than pains. Recollect, its publication in an ephemeral Newspaper will not injure the after appearance in a volume; it will rather act as an advertisement.

With this subject in my head, I have not yet replied to the most kind part of your letter—a more than [kind] inquiry about my boy. He has now grown into manhood, steady and persevering for the profession of an engineer—good and affectionate to me. On our return to England, seeing his decided turn of mind and talent for mechanism, I performed my duty—with the prospect of our inevitably living asunder—in giving him the best mathematical instruction, which he sucked in like mother's milk. Then, what was to be done? To apprentice him à la mode to a famous engineer was to tie him down, at the expence of £500, to the learning of mechanical drawing, and nothing else, for five or seven years—to his master's profit, not to his own. He rather chose to learn the entire handicraft of the profession; but there was another difficulty; not only a large premium, but the probability (for many cases have occurred) of being kept in the back ground from jealousy, should he evince too much talent. Men of science, after all that has been said against poets, from Sir Isaac Newton downwards, are far more envious than it is thought. At length he fixed on learning what he could, with a small premium, of a Millwright at Midhurst, whom his uncle,³ who lives there, highly recommended.

³ William Brown, a doctor, second oldest of Brown's brothers.

I went there two months since, and found him hard at work, but complaining that his master gave him inferior work—the old story! The master owned to me his ability, promised to act differently, and, when my back was turned, still kept him back. Carlino has left him, and, at this moment, is working for himself at a machine for cutting tobacco for Trelawny.³ When finished, he will take it to London, hoping great credit for it, and will be sure, as I last night wrote to him to do so, to call and pay his respects to you. I ought to mention that he has had *more* than a grateful remembrance of you; for, a twelvemonth ago, he asked me if you would not do him a service if you could—and I, for which I may be blamed, replied that I had no *right* to expect so great a favour.

Now permit me to speak of your last born—your “Poetry for the People.” The title alone interests me greatly—such poetry is wanted—not such as E. Elliot’s to keep alive discontent, justly or unjustly, but to diffuse happiness. I will direct the Plymouth bookseller, Edmund Fry, to request it from your publisher. It will then be sure to reach me. I am very anxious to read it, and very thankful to you.

Pray do not remind me again of George Keats!—I know nothing of him.

I am sorry to perceive you are in mourning—but I hope it is only for the Princess.⁴

Give my best respects to those who know me;

and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Your’s most truly,

Cha^s Brown.

³ E. J. Trelawny (1792–1881), author, adventurer, friend of Shelley and Byron (see I, lviii f., lxi n.).

⁴ Princess Augusta, daughter of George III, died on September 22, 1840.

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GEORGE KEATS TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE ¹

25 November 1840

Address: —Single—/ Paid/ Rev^d James F. Clarke./ Meadville/ Pennsylvania. *Postmark:* LOUISVILLE KY. NOV 28. Printed by Madeleine B. Stern (S), *PMLA*, LVI (1941), 210-212.

Louisville Nov 25. 1840

My dear Sir

Notwithstanding my strong desire that you should dwell among us again, I think you have done right in declining our recent invitation.² The warmest feelings of respect and friendship for you are entertained by almost all, if not all your late parishioners, as well as great numbers of the community in general, and I <entertain> cherish hopes that such feelings may some time³ hence operate to draw you back to us, when there may not be any counteracting reasons either on you[r] own part, or that of any of our congregation. At present we are very well supplied by M^r Hayward,⁴ who with much against him—youth, inexperience in the pulpit &c, manages by earnestness and clearness to excite and keep alive the attention to an extent extremely unusual even among old preachers— I have no hesitation in prophecying for him a high station among his brethren.

¹ See II, 35n. Endorsed by Clarke, "George Keats Nov 25." Harvard also has a transcript of the letter made in 1935 by Louis A. Holman.

² Clarke left Louisville on June 16, 1840.

³ S sometimes.

⁴ "Reverend John H. Heywood, for many years the minister in the Unitarian Church in Louisville" (S). See I, ci n.

Emma ⁵ says you wish to correspond with me, alas I am engaged in too wearing a communion with business in hard times to be able to <put> communicate my thoughts on subjects that would be interesting to you to read, or me to write. I do not say I have no such thoughts, for I beleive, I reflect and cogitate more on literary and philosophic matters than is consistent with the best possible frame of mind for a man of business— But good or bad, my ideas come and go without being put to the test of black and white, and it would require much practice to record them as you can do, all in proper dress without effort. I very often think I see things, coincidences, that have never been uttered, but I forget all when the pen is in my hand, my “spirits will not come when I do call,” ⁶ so I may fairly conclude they are all, like Glendower's, <all> in my imagination—

Emma remains so nearly the same in looks, and manner, her encrease in size and more ready utterance, only seemed her old self every way magnified. Miss E. Fuller ⁷ has resolved to commence a school in Cinc', and unless she changes her intention will leave for that place to morrow; my opportunity to judge of her fitness is not much, I think however that she will succeed in *teaching*, and do ample justice to her pupils, but I fear she is not calculated to go through the struggle of the business part of her profession without much vexation, but if she can endure the first six months she will succeed well.

Tell Mr Heidecowper I was much pleased with his review

⁵ Emma Keats Speed had been in Boston. She told E. F. Madden (*Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LV [1877], 357) that on Clarke's advice, “I went to the school of Margaret Fuller, in Massachusetts. She was an excellent and eloquent woman, and I was charmed at first by her magnificent speech.”

⁶ *I Henry IV*, III.i.53-56 (S).

⁷ Ellen, sister of Margaret Fuller, and later wife of the Harvard poet, William Ellery Channing (1818-1901).

of Brownsons labouring classes;⁸ not only M^r Brownson, but you and the whole band of ardent progress men, and reformers would do well to consider, that <all> "new⁹ opinions are not subjected to the same severe scrutiny which the old ones are undergoing."¹⁰ It is easy enough to cut down and destroy on paper, but it is difficult to build up even "castles in air" to replace the solid fabrics so coolly obliterated. Brow[n]son is bold enough to attempt building, and by so doing proves to the world that it must be cautious in following his advice to pull down.

I have read the second number of the *Dial* and find much in it to please me, and to instruct me too, but like other progress works there is much in it straining and worse than useless. I have not the book by me, but I remember passages¹¹ to the effect that a student desiring progress, and the highest self culture, should altogether disregard fame, and the means of living; but be satisfied with the Hermits fare, and retirement, and live the life of an anchorite, being occupied alone with his own inward nature, like John the Baptist; <and> Diogenes and his followers are somewhat associated with the idea. Now what sort of a man would be produced, never mind how lofty his genius or great his acquirements, who should plunge himself into the affectation of setting up as a model for imitation the life¹² and character of the stern Baptist; that he should have lived and been exactly what he was, seems necessary in the progress of religion, and morals, he would have been out of

⁸ Orestes A. Brownson's "The Laboring Classes," a review of Carlyle's *Chartism*, appeared in the *Boston Quarterly Review*, July, 1840 (III, 358-395); Huidekoper's "Brownson on the Laboring Classes," in the *Western Messenger*, November, 1840 (VIII, 316-330). Noted by S.

⁹ S a "New.

¹⁰ Quoting the *Western Messenger*, VIII, 316 (S).

¹¹ He refers to an article by F. H. Hedge in the *Boston Dial*, October, 1840 (I, 175-182) (S).

¹² S lip.

place after the advent of our Saviour as completely as he was necessary before his coming. Only think how the world would laugh at a flock of students seeking out solitary places, and dotting our forests with hermitages because they would cultivate themselves to reproduce on ¹³ the world the effects caused by John on the morals and character of mankind.

Present my kind wishes to your Lady and her Father and accept my congratulations on the arrival of the welcome stranger ¹⁴— All desire to be remb^d to you and I am

With much regard

Your Friend

Geo Keats.

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GEORGE KEATS TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE ¹

17 January 1841

Address: <(Paid)>/ Rev^d Ja^s F. Clarke/ <Meadville> Boston/ <Pennsylvania>/ per P. H. Conant Esq^r. ² Printed by Madeleine B. Stern (S), *PMLA*, LVI (1941), 212-215. Some of her verbal variants are given in footnotes.

Louisville Jan^y 17. 1841.

My dear Sir

Shrinking from a correspondence with one who has new thoughts and ideas to communicate every day by one who is daily travelling in the well beaten track of business, is so foolish, and so out of all reason for a dealing man, who habitually tries to get the best in a bargain, that on second thoughts I will

¹³ S in.

¹⁴ "Clarke's son Herman, who died in 1849" (S).

¹ See II, 35n. Harvard also has a transcript of the letter made in 1935 by Louis A. Holman.

² A member of Clarke's Louisville congregation.

close with you in a contract to keep up a letter communication, and it may possibly turn out that my habits of punctuality derived from a commercial life, may hereafter cause me to be the more faithful of the two in the performance of my engagement. My mite will ever be forthcoming, while your overflowing treasure may run ³ to waste. You see now I have clinched the bargain.

You have a queer way of showing how easy letter writing is, by quoting Lamb, Burns, & Cowper as examples, the giving the fragments of thoughts with a few dashes of the pen, can only be done by one in 10,000, and <the> ordinary conversation, on paper is mere ⁴ drivelling; only those who have very *much* to say can write an interesting letter, the essence of which is to condense *much* into a small and piquant form: which I have not the art to do as this page testifies. Miss Ellen F ⁵ is still confined to her bed with neuralgia, she has been so confined 2 mos. and I see no reason why she will not be in the same state 2 mos longer, Dr Jarvis ⁶ thinks she had better return to New England, where he says there is not one case of the disease to 50 here. Emma waits upon her so devotedly that we of the Family hardly consider her as returned home to us. Miss Ellen has an offer of 400\$ a year to superintend the education of 9 young ladies, and had she been able, could have entered on the charge on the 1st Feb^r, as the matter stands she has the proposition to commence 1st May. I think however that she had better return to her native climate before the terrible neuralgia takes a life lean ⁷ of her constitution.

I received yesterday a long and most excellent letter from

³ S which your . . . seem.

⁴ S more.

⁵ See the preceding letter.

⁶ "Dr. Edward Jarvis of Louisville, a member of Clarke's congregation" (S).

⁷ Or perhaps lease (S).

your distinguished friend Miss Margaret; ⁸ in answer to some remarks of mine about the ⁹ new philosophers of the dial and so forth, she gives a condensed view of her own opinions, and what she thinks of the present state of society, its cold and worldly objects, and what it will become unless some leaven of spirituallity shall be infused into it. I do not look upon you as approaching to ultraism among the reformers, and yet judging from her letter of her *good sense* I beleive her to be more near the truth than you are. She considers however that the excessive transcendentalism of the dial being the earnest expression of sincere and noble feelings, and deep thought,¹⁰ will act as leaven in society, I fear it will not, it o'er leaps itself,¹¹ and the gazing world only sees that it has not, and cannot have a secure seat, <the> its pendulum has swayed more on the other side than that of worldliness is on this side of truth. The spirituallity of the bible, and its practical application in Shakspeare, is the real leaven which does from time to time show its influence in the world, and I firmly beleive that any philosophy of more etherial essence, or less material substance, will never lay hold of others than students, or retired thinkers; I count as nothing those who take hold from desire of self distinction or eccentricity. I did somewhere meet with that passage ¹² that so tenderly brings into linked feelings the timid hares, the sylvan woods, the fire side, and the human heart. but in my worldly progress, it drew from me, or excited in me but one pleasing reflection, and I passed it by. You, open to all the charities, under more favorable influences dwell upon it, gather it, and show it up to me unintentionally reproving me for my indifference to <real> true

⁸ Fuller, later Marchioness Ossoli.

⁹ *S omits.*

¹⁰ *S thoughts.*

¹¹ *Macbeth*, I.vii.27.

¹² "The reference may be to 'Glimmerings' in the *Dial* [I, 379-385], 1841" (*S*).

pleasure. I am still obliged to you for the *pearl*,¹³ not being altogether *swine*.¹⁴

After church.

Notwithstanding my head is crowned (visible to all) with reverence, my mind during M^r Heywood's¹⁵ prayer was full of "sylvan tendernesses," gentle human hearts, fearful dumb creatures loving and being loved, great oak's "branch charmed by the earnest stars"¹⁶ and all their fraternity with "melancholy boughs," and the homes of man, all linked together in one harmonious and kind{ly} but melancholy association. I had read Dana's two years before the mast¹⁷ before I received your letter, and agree with you in your opinion of it, its freshness and unstrained truthfulness are refreshing, and I have faith that I have received from it a truer impression of what a sailor's life and mind are, than I have heretofore derived from much reading about them. I remember with much pleasure my one short conversation with the author's Father,¹⁸ of whose character, and genius I believe I formed a just conception at that one interview. Emma and Ellen Fuller have spoken much of him, and it all seems to me repetition and confirmation of my previous thoughts. If it should be in your way convey my respects to him, or rather say that I remember him with much interest, you will oblige me by so doing. He is to some extent associated in my mind with the humanities of "timid hares <loo>¹⁹ uplooking into human eyes." M^r Keats intended to have written to you her

¹³ Stern thinks the reference here is to "Margaret" Fuller, that is, "the pearl."

¹⁴ Matthew 7:6.

¹⁵ See II, 41n.

¹⁶ *Hyperion*, I.74.

¹⁷ R. H. Dana's book appeared in 1840.

¹⁸ R. H. Dana (1787-1879).

¹⁹ S too.

thanks for your present of Schiller by your Sister,²⁰ and I hope will yet do so, whether it was your letter, or the present it gave the first notice of, that prompted her to utter in her hearty manner how much she was gratified, I know not, but certain it is, I have not seen her more pleased for many a day. She fancies she could acknowledge your kindness in a very suitable manner, and I have been urging her to do so, particularly as she values my formal epistles somewhat low, I may confess to you in your ear, lower than they deserve, "at least in my opinion" "altho' I say it that should not say it." ²¹ She claims that her sarcasms are so general that no one has a right to apply them to himself, and if any one finding the cap to fit so exactly his own case pleases to selfappropriate it, he may thank himself for the sting it contains. And so she bullies herself into the notion of the perfect benevolence and justice of her conduct, when she gratifies herself in <excert> exercising a quality that is in almost all cases incompatible with a fair consideration for the sore or tender points (which such powers are very acute in discovering) of others— However she is perhaps as ready to cure as to wound, and is at the present writing very favourably disposed ²² toward you and wishes you all happiness— Here I am at the end of legitimate writing space without having said half my say, many persons hate crossed letters, my piquant Wife among the number, and perhaps you may be another, so I will defer what I had to say about Emma, Miss Ellen Fuller, M^r Heywood, the Church &c, and having been at the celebration of the Pilgrim Fathers Society an invited and toasted guest, I had something to say of them and their descendants and the English puritans and

²⁰ Sarah Freeman Clarke, an artist living in Rome. See II, 342n.

²¹ A commonplace, which turns up in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wit at Several Weapons*, II.ii (*Works*, II [1880], 337).

²² Or perhaps disposed. The remainder of the letter is written vertically across the writing on p. 1.

those ²³ glorious commonwealth ²⁴ Men <who> upon whom their mantle had fallen: ²⁵ which would more than fill another sheet, and much to your satisfaction I doubt not exclude the politics upon which you have so maliciously touched— Present rem^t to your Lady, and M^r H——, ²⁶ and accept my best wishes for your first born, ²⁷ who if he thinks at all is beginning the world a thorough materialist, his life is spent in going “du lit a la table, de la table au lit” and you a spirituallist cannot help it, he has entered the world school, and his first lesson is to care altogether for the gratification of his animal appetites. All desire their good wishes

and I am

Your worldly friend & true

Geo Keats—

→ 164 ←

CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

14 March 1841

Address: R. M. Milnes Esq^r M. P./ Pall Mall/ London. *Postmarks:* PLYMOUTH MR 14 1841 C; A 16 MR 16 1841; *Crabtree Penny Post.*

Laira Green, near Plymouth.

14 March 1841.

My dear Sir,

You have often urged me, as Keats's literary executor, to publish his Poems, remaining in my possession, together with his Life, which has long since been written; and I have, as often,

²³ *S* these.

²⁴ *Apparently written commonweeath.*

²⁵ II Kings 2:13f.

²⁶ Henry Huidekoper (*S*).

²⁷ Herman.

pleaded difficulties in my way. That which arose from his brother George's *veto*, as I was told by his forbidding friend, M^r Dilke of the Athenæum, no longer exists. I desired to give both the Poems and the Life the utmost publicity; but in that I was foiled. At length, after much delay in answering, the Editor of the Monthly Chronicle¹ agreed to print them in his rather unpopular Magazine. But as he is a stranger to me, as I could have no controul, and as I am on the eve of quitting England for ever, I considered it would be my wiser plan to confide in a true lover of Keats, and place the Life and Poems in his hands, to act in my stead. Such confidence I am ready to repose in you, if you will undertake the task—the responsibility—the gratification—or whatever you may be induced to call it. I have thus unreservedly stated why I apply to you, without compliments—for they always look as if they concealed something. Should you consent to accept of the *trust*, I will send you the *Deeds*.

I have bought land in New Zealand, with machinery to take thither, from pins and needles up to a Saw-Mill and a steam-engine. Carlino, who called on you when you were out of town at the beginning of February, will sail for the land of promise in a few days, perhaps in two or three days; and I shall follow him at the end of next month, or at the beginning of May. Do not say I am too old for such an undertaking, when I have his young limbs and skill to aid me. He did not tempt me to go; it was my proposition to him, at first an unwilling

¹ Earlier (see II, 39), Brown refers to the *Morning Chronicle*, a newspaper; here, to a magazine, the *Monthly Chronicle*, *A National Journal of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art* (7 vols., 1838–1841). In his copy of Milnes (Morgan Library) Dilke observes that Brown offered the memoir to Galignani, other booksellers, and finally to the *Morning Chronicle*. Blunden, *Shelley and Keats* (1925), p. 83, shows that before June 10, 1837, he had tried to get Saunders and Otley to publish it. See also I, lxii, for Carlino's words.

listener. Yet, as may be imagined, I go for his sake, not for mine. We are partners—he to work and I to keep accounts, shares equal. I put faith, you percieve, in his prudence as well as in his talent.

Your's most sincerely,
Cha^s Brown the Emigrant.

»» 165 ««

CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

19 March 1841

Address: R. M. Milnes Esq^{rs}/ M. P. The second paragraph is quoted by Bodurtha, pp. 23f.

Laira Green, near Plymouth.
19 March 1841.

My dear Sir,

The MS Poems cannot well be sent by post; you shall receive them by coach, with a notice by post of the day they will be sent.

In the mean time, I send you the *Life*; ¹ as I wish to receive your judgment of it, as soon as convenient. There are but two points, on which I desire to retain my opinion—1st the propriety, the truth of what I have written against the Quarterly and the Edinburg, and against Blackwood's Magazine—2nd the *long* history, through Severn, of Keats's painful illness, which should not be concealed, should not be less dwelt upon.

Yesterday and to-day I have been occupied on this subject, and become fevered and nervous. I feel myself quite unable to fix my attention on these papers, whether in my hand writing or in his, any longer.

I must, however, touch on one topic. You will perceive,

¹ See No. 166.

I have entirely spared M^r George Keats—not for want of proof. Without giving his name, he is included among those who borrowed *small* sums from Keats. Do you approve of my forbearance? The evidence against M^r George is incontrovertible, but does not lie in a small compass. M^r Dilke, of the Athenæum paper, denies the evidence, and, though he stands alone,² has chosen to quarrel bitterly with me for my statement. Yet I have a witness “on this side Heaven too”³—M^r Haslam, Solicitor, N^o 9 Copthall Court, Throgmorton Street, whom Keats held dearly—I believe they were schoolfellows.

Your's very truly,
Cha^a Brown.

»» 166 ««

CHARLES BROWN: LIFE OF JOHN KEATS¹

19 March 1841

N^o 1

Life <and Poems—>

of

John Keats;

by

Charles Armitage Brown.

“He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music; from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known

² An unfair statement, since Abbey had likewise vindicated George (see I, 285f.).

³ Compare *Paradise Lost*, II.1006, “To that side Heaven.”

¹ The background of this sketch is given in Brown's letters of December 21, 1836, October 18, 25, 1840, and March 14, 19, 1841. Apparently he

In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
 Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
 Which wields the world with never wearied love,
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
 Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
 His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
 Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
 All new successions to the forms they wear."

Shelley's "Adonais". St: 42 & 43.

These lines are from "Adonais", an elegy by Shelley on the death of Keats. When "Adonais" was sent to me from Italy, I recognised,² in these lines, my own every day, involuntary, inevitable reflections on the loss of my friend. I honoured the genius that could embody them in language so soothing and poetical; and I eagerly desired, when on my road to Italy, to hold Shelley's hand in mine, for I had never met him,—but he too, a few days before my arrival in the very city where he had resided for years, was lost.

began to write it in November, 1836, but made changes and revisions in March, 1841. For convenience the *Life* is here printed after the letter of March 19, with which it was forwarded to Milnes. Disappointing and incomplete as it is, Brown's biography is still valuable as the only source of information about various incidents and as the best available text of several letters. Remarkably enough the Formans print seven letters (*Letters*, Nos. 154, 155, 215, 218, 233, 235, 241, but *not*, as they say, 240, which follows Brown's text) from the texts of Milnes and Patmore (who followed Brown's *Life*) instead of following the *Life* direct.

The manuscript was admirably edited (with a few misreadings, nearly all of which are indicated below in the footnotes as *B*) by Bodurtha and Pope in 1937. Hence I have reduced my annotations to a bare minimum.

² *B* recognized.

Often have I been urged to write a biography of Keats, and almost as often have I urged a promise of every information in my power to others. Earnestly wishing it done, I have myself recoiled from the office; for it is painful. He was dearly beloved, and honoured as a superior being by me. Now that twenty years have passed since I lost him, his memory is still my chief happiness; because I think of him in the feeling of Shelley's lines. But, when I must, while writing his life, recal, during our intimate and unreserved friendship, his disappointment, his sorrows, and his death, each crowded with images and circumstance[s], which force themselves on my mind, the pain well nigh overcomes my duty. For it is a duty; and, since it seems to devolve on me, I will perform it. His fame is part of my life. Indignation at his enemies, with contempt for their listeners, has been another cause of my having deferred this task; but now, it is true, the best and the greater part of his literary countrymen have learnt to feel delight in his poetry.

John Keats was born in Moorfields on 29th October 1796.* His father was a native of Devonshire, and married a daughter of the proprietor of an inn. At the age of eight or nine years Keats lost his father; and, while he was yet a boy, his mother also died. He was the eldest of three sons and a daughter. Property in the funds to the amount of about £10,000 was be-

* I cannot be certain of this date. While I was in Italy, and since my return, friends have in vain endeavoured to discover the registry of his baptism. One of his schoolfellows informs me that he thinks Keats must have been born a year earlier. The year of his birth I calculate from what he himself casually said of his age; but I suspect that his birth day, from his dislike to having it *kept*, is not correctly given, though said to have been given by himself to a lady, who asked him the question, with an avowed purpose of *keeping it*

queathed among them; £2,000 to each of the brothers, and the remainder to the sister.

He was educated at the Rev^d M^r Clarke's school at Enfield, and afterwards apprenticed to M^r Hammond, a surgeon, in Church Street, Edmonton. Owing to his early removal from the school, he felt a deficiency in the latin language; and therefore, during his apprenticeship, made and carefully wrote out a literal prose translation of the whole of Virgil's *Æneid*. At that time also he studied his own language with all the critical nicety in his power, and made himself, for his age, learned in history. After the usual term of years with M^r Hammond, he became a student at Guy's Hospital; where he was indefatigable in his application to anatomy, medicine, and natural history.

Though born to be a poet, he was ignorant of his birth-right until he had completed his eighteenth year. Before this period ³ his leisure hours, which were <scanty> few, had not been occupied in reading works of imagination; neither had he attempted, nor thought of writing a single line. In one whose passions were vivid, whose imagination was unbounded, and who, not many months after, was <entirely> absorbed in poetry, it is strange that no indication of his powers should have appeared at the first burst of youth. Other and opposite studies, pursued with an eager temperament, may partly, but, perhaps, not wholly account for it. From his earliest boyhood he had an acute sense of beauty, whether in a flower, a tree, the sky, or the animal world; how was it that his sense of beauty did not naturally seek in his mind for images by which he could best express his feelings? It was the "Faery Queen" that awakened his genius. In Spenser's fairy land he was enchanted, breathed in a new world, and became another being; till, enamoured of the stanza, he attempted to imitate it, and succeeded. This account of the sudden developement of his poetic powers I first received

³ A comma is canceled here.

from his brothers, and afterwards from himself. This his <first> earliest attempt, the "Imitation of Spenser", is <published> in his first volume of Poems, <in his first volume of Poems,> and is peculiarly interesting to those who are acquainted with its history.

"Now morning from her orient chamber came,

And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant hill; &c"

If any youth, after repeated trials of his strength, were to produce verses worthy to compete with these, who would not hold forth his hand to him, and whose heart would not throb with fear at what he might endure?

From this moment he began, deeply and fervently, to read and ponder over our poets. Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare were his household gods. When his soul arose into poetry, it was imbued with our earliest authors. <He at once relinquished> He did not immediately relinquish his profession; for this decisive step was not taken till about two years afterwards, some time before May 1817, when he wrote from Canterbury to one of his brothers,—“I have forgotten all surgery.” ‘ He has assured me the muse had no influence over him in his determination, he being compelled, by conscientious motives alone, to quit the profession, upon discovering that he was unfit to perform a surgical operation. He ascribed his inability to an overwrought apprehension of every possible chance of doing evil in the wrong direction of the instrument. “My last operation,” he told me, “was the opening of a man’s temporal artery. I did it with the utmost nicety; but, reflecting on what passed through my mind at the time, my dexterity seemed a miracle, and I never took up the lancet again.”

Some of his poems were shown, by a friend, to <M’> Leigh Hunt, at that time editor of the “Examiner,” who was instantly aware of their great merit, and their promise of excel-

‘ The letter is apparently unknown.

lence from the young poet. This, together with praise from many others, induced him to prepare for the press a small volume, which appeared in the spring of 1817; and, while it was publishing, he had written the first book of "Endymion."

In the latter part of that year's summer I first saw him. It was on the Hampstead road that we were introduced to each other; the minutest circumstances attending our first meeting are strong in my memory, but they must be uninteresting to <others> all except myself. Still, as in that interview of a minute I inwardly desired his acquaintanceship, if not his friendship, I will take this occasion of describing his personal appearance. He was small in stature, well proportioned, compact in form, and, though thin, rather muscular;—one of the many who prove that manliness is distinct from height and bulk. There is no magic equal to that of an ingenuous countenance, and I never beheld any human being's so ingenuous as his. His full fine eyes were lustrously intellectual, and beaming (at that time!) with hope and joy. It has been remarked that the most faulty feature was his mouth; and, at intervals, it was so. But, whenever he spoke, or was, in any way, excited, the expression of the lips was so varied and delicate, that they might be called handsome.

He had taken lodgings for himself and his brothers at Hampstead, and I was his neighbour. I succeeded in making him come often to my house by never asking him to come oftener; and I let him feel himself at perfect liberty there, chiefly by avoiding to assure him of the fact. We quickly became intimate.

Every one who met him sought for his society, and he was surrounded by a little circle of hearty friends. While "Endymion" was in progress, as some degree of solitude was necessary, he made excursions to Box Hill, Hastings, the Isle of Wight, Oxford, and lastly Teignmouth, whither he went to attend on

his youngest brother, whose ill state of health required a mild air, and whence the last book of "Endymion" was forwarded for the press. At times he relieved himself from continued application to this work by writing sonnets and other short poems, most of which have been printed; but among them is one,— "Lines on seeing a lock of Milton's hair", which is yet unknown, and ought not to be so

Immediately on the appearance of his first volume "Blackwood's Magazine" commenced a series of attacks upon him, month after month. These attacks doubtless originated and were carried on in unprincipled party spirit. The inexperienced Keats, without a thought of the consequence, in a political point of view, had addressed his volume to his friend <M> Leigh Hunt in a dedicatory sonnet; and, still less to be forgiven, he had written another sonnet on the day <M> Leigh Hunt left prison, where he had been confined for two years, in expiation of what had been construed into a disloyal libel. There was no indication of criticism in "Blackwood's Magazine" on Keats's works; there was nothing but abuse and ridicule to prevent their sale. An author's person, however objectionable, cannot have any thing to do with a question on his literary merits. These hirelings, however, pretended to think otherwise; and, in order to hold him up to public ridicule, they dealt unreservedly in falsehood. They represented him as affected, effeminate, and <stru> sauntering about without a neckcloth, in imitation of the portrait of Spenser; every word of which was as far from the truth as their jokes on "pimple-faced Hazlitt,"⁵ one whom I never saw with a pimple on his face. Hazlitt himself remarked to me,— "Of what use would it be were I publicly to convict them of untruth in this description of me?—of none

⁵ See Z., or Lockhart, "On the Cockney School of Prose Writers," *New Monthly Magazine*, October, November, 1818, January, 1819 (X, 198-202, 299-304, 487-492), and *Blackwood's*, April, August, 1818 (III, 75, 599).

whatever. They would then persuade their readers, far more to blame than themselves, that in their misrepresentation consisted the very marrow, the excellence of the jest;—nay, that the jest would be nothing if it were true.” The power of these writers, with their unremitting ridicule was great, for they had talent. Mr Lockhart, the son in law of Sir Walter Scott was generally known as the editor of “Blackwood’s Magazine” at that time. At a later period indeed he denied he was the editor; but he refused to deny that he ever had been the editor.

As quickly as possible after the publication of “Endymion” an article appeared on it in the “Quarterly Review.” In this there was nothing but rage and malice, too undisguised, I thought at the time, to prove injurious, and utterly unrecommended by talent of any kind. Still the high reputation of the work, in which it stood, carried it, in spite of its demerits, safe into the public’s ear. The public could not suspect that Mr Gifford would compromise the character of the “Quarterly” by an untenable decided condemnation. How few are at the trouble of forming their own judgment on a book!—in this exists the power of a reviewer. Shelley, in his preface to *Adonais*, asks,—“As to <“>*Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might “be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who “had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, <“>*Paris*<“>, and <“>*Woman*<“>, and a <“>*Syrian Tale*<“>, and Mr Lefanu, and Mr Barrett, and Mr Howard “Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure?” This question from Shelley may be unanswerable; yet still the *Quarterly Review* is read with confidence by a large portion of the public, those who cannot or will not exert their faculties or their courage to form an opinion of their own.

As an antidote to this poison we naturally looked forward to the “*Edinburg Review*.” Mr Jeffrey, however remained, and continued to remain silent; as if quietly watching whether the

victim was crushed, or could possibly survive. At length, too late for a good purpose, not till August 1820, after the publication of a third volume, when Keats had received his death-blow, there appeared in the "Edinburg Review" a criticism on ⁶ his poems, from which criticism I select the following passages. "Any one who would represent the whole poem" (*Endymion*) "as despicable, must either have no notion of poetry, or no regard to truth."—"He who does not find <in it> a great deal "in it to admire and to give delight, cannot in his heart see "much beauty in the two exquisite dramas to which we have "already alluded," (Fletcher's <">*Faithful Shepherdess*<">), "and Ben Jonson's <">*Sad Shepherd*<">,) "or find any great "pleasure in some of the finest creations of Mi[l]ton and Shakespeare."—"We are very much inclined indeed to add, that we "do not know any book which we would sooner employ as a "test to ascertain whether any one had in him a native relish "for poetry, and a genuine sensibility to its intrinsic charm."

M^r Jeffrey, in apology for not having, during the two previous years, noticed a young poet, whom he at last so highly eulogized, chose to make use of this assertion;—"We had never happened to see either of these volumes till very lately." Reviewers are accustomed to say any thing at their will and pleasure; yet, unless we doubt the gentleman's assertion, we are compelled to accuse the critic, (which would be irreparable disgrace,) of having neglected his self assumed duty as a careful examiner into the literature of the day.

In the summer of 1818 Keats offered ⁷ to be my companion in a walking visit to the English lakes and the highlands of Scotland. We first went by coach to Liverpool, as his brother George was about to embark from that port for America, and thence to Lancaster, from which town we commenced our

⁶ Apparently changed from of.

⁷ B offered.

walk, each with a knapsack on his back. I cannot forget the joy, the rapture of my friend when he suddenly, and for the first time, became sensible to the full effect of mountain scenery. It was just before our descent to the village of Bowness, at a turn of the road, when the lake of Windermere at once came into view. In the evening he repeated to me his beautiful and pathetic poem of "Isabella", which he had just written, before he left Teignmouth. All was enchantment to us both.

He had been introduced to Wordsworth in London, and, to show respect to that great poet, he called on him at Rydale; but it was at the time of a general election, and therefore Wordsworth was away from his quiet home, at Lowther Hall. <The young poet looked thoughtful at this exposure of his elder.>

After having made something like the usual to{ur} through Westmoreland and Cumberland, we journied by coach from Carlisle to Dumfries, where we stood before the grave of Burns. Then, as we walked, <through> by Solway Firth, through that delightful part of Kirkcudbrightshire, the scene of "Guy Mannering", I talked of Meg Merrilies, while Keats, who had not yet read that {nove}l, was much interested in the character. There was {a} little spot, close to our path-way,—“There”, he said, in an instant positively realising⁸ a creation of the novelist, “in that very spot, without a shadow of doubt, has old “Meg Merrilies often boiled her kettle!” It was among pieces of rock, and brambles, and broom, ornamented with a profusion of honeysuckle, wild roses, and foxglove, all in the very blush and fullness of blossom. While we sat at breakfast, he was occupied in writing to his young sister, and, for her amusement, he composed a ballad on old Meg. I took a copy of it at the time.⁹

⁸ B realizing.

⁹ See *Letters*, p. 166.

It was for the amusement of a school-girl; yet how full of imagination!

Old Meg she was a gipsy &c

Want of time to effect our numerous intentions, with other circumstances, compelled us to forego seeing the Giant's Cause-way, though we had proceeded towards it as far as Belfast. On our return, walking northwards¹⁰ by the coast, Ailsa rock attracted our continued notice. It seemed, at our first view, the sun shining on it, like an enormous transparent tortoise asleep upon the calm water. Its height is 940 feet, measured <on a> on its perpendicular side, above the level of the sea. Walking onward, we saw, as it were, the shoulders of this rock; then, as we still walked on, we saw more and more, with the mountains of Arran behind, the whole extent of Cantire, and even Ireland {l}ike a little dusky cloud in the horizon. At {ou}r inn in Girvan he wrote this <"> Sonnet on Ailsa rock. <">

Hearken, thou craggy ocean-pyramid &c¹¹

We were now in Ayrshire, the country of Burns, a region of quiet beauty, with much of the character of England. We descended to the "banks and braes of bonny Doon", examined the ruin of Kirk Alloway, indebted to the poet's imagery alone for its attraction, and saw the town of Ayr before us,—

"Auld Ayr whom ne'er a town surpasses

"For honest men and bonny lasses."

Not far from this side of the town stood the cottage where Burns was born. Keats had predetermined to write a sonnet under its roof; but its conversion into a whiskey-shop, together with its drunken landlord, went far towards the annihilation of his poetic power.

¹⁰ Or *perhaps* north-wards.

¹¹ See *Letters*, pp. 181f.

<This mortal body of a thousand days &c¹²>

We found our way, through Glasgow, into the high-land{s} where, soon quitting the carriage-roads, we explored some unfrequented districts, which, I had read, offered still grander scenery. At Oban we crossed to Mull, and, with the assistance of a guide, traversed, by no beaten track, the whole extent of that island, until we came to the celebrated island of Iona. Thence we had a gentle sail to Staffa, where we had the good fortune to arrive, at low water, and just as the sea was becalmed, so that our boat landed us close into the mouth of Fingal's cave. Keats wrote some lines on this cave, a fragment of a poem, which I never could induce him to finish.

Not Aladdin magian &c

Returned to Oban, we passed by the romantic mountains of Ballahulish to Fort William, and mounted Ben Nevis.¹³ When on the summit of this mountain, we were enveloped in a cloud, and, waiting till it was slowly wafted away, he sat on the stones, a few feet¹⁴ from the edge of that fearful precipice, fifteen hundred feet perpendicular from the valley below, and wrote this sonnet.

Read me a lesson, Muse, and read it loud &c

For some time he had been annoyed by a slight inflammation^{14a} in the throat, occasioned by rainy days, fatigue, privation, and, I am afraid, in one instance, by damp sheets. It was prudently resolved, with the assistance of medical advice, that if, when we reached Inverness, he should not be much better, he should part from me, and proceed from the¹⁵ port of Cromarty to London by sea. He was not recovered, and we parted there.

¹² See *Letters*, pp. 177, 183, 194.

¹³ *B* Nevis.

¹⁴ *B* feet away.

^{14a} *B* inflammation.

¹⁵ *Changed from that.*

In my solitary after-wanderings I much lamented the loss of his beloved intelligence at my side.*

I have a poem which he composed, with more than usual care, during our walks. I introduce it here.

There is a charm in footing slow across a silent plain &c ¹⁶

It was well that he did leave me; for not only was he speedily reinstated in his usual good health, but it was necessary he should be at Hampstead, where he found his younger brother alarmingly ill. This youth, dear to him,¹⁷ <brother>, had been, for some time, threatened by consumption; and now the disease had taken its most wasting and rapid form. By the time I had finished my lonely tour, and returned to my home, it was not expected he could live many days.

Early one morning I was awakened in my bed by a pressure on my hand. It was Keats, who came to tell me his brother was no more. I said nothing, and we both remained silent for awhile, my hand fast locked in his. At length, my thoughts returning from the dead to the living, I said,—“Have nothing
“more to do with those lodgings,—and alone too. Had you not

* ———at my side.

Our original intention was, after visiting other parts of the highlands, to return by Edinburg. This somehow became known to M^r Blackwood, who sent, through a third party, an invitation to Keats.¹⁸ Nothing could exceed the impudence of such an invitation, nor the guilt of the person, through whom it was forwarded, counselling the poet to endeavour to soften the rancour of his enemies in that quarter by attention to it.

I have a poem &c ¹⁹

¹⁶ See *Letters*, pp. 195-197.

¹⁷ *Changed from his.*

¹⁸ See II, 253f.

¹⁹ *B* omits the first and last lines of this addition and prints the remainder as continuous with the text.

"better live with me?" He paused, pressed my hand warmly, and replied,—“I think it would be better.” From that moment he was my inmate.

When his grief was alleviated, to which effect his many <kind> friends contributed their kind appliances, his hours became gradually absorbed once more in poetry. It was then he wrote <“>*Hyperion*<”>. At the beginning of the year we where he began <the commencement of> were on a visit in Hampshire, <where he wrote> <“>*The* and finished it on our return.

eve of St Agnes <”>, <On our return he wrote <“> *Lamia*>.” I observed that every short poem, which he was tempted to compose, was scrawled on the first piece of paper at hand, and that it was afterwards used as a mark to a book, or thrust any where aside. In the spring of 1819 a nightingale had built her nest near my house. Keats felt a tranquil and continual joy in her song; and one morning he took his chair from the breakfast-table to the grass-plot under a plum-tree, where he sat for two or three hours. When he came into the house, I perceived he had some scraps of paper in his hand, and these he was quietly thrusting behind the books. On inquiry, I found those scraps, four or five in number, contained his poetic feeling on the song of our nightingale. The writing was not well legible; and it was difficult to arrange the stanzas on so many scraps. With his assistance I succeeded, and this was his <“>*Ode to a Nightingale*<”>, a poem which has been the delight of every one. Immediately afterwards I searched for more of his (in reality) fugitive pieces, in which task, at my request, he again assisted me. Thus I rescued that <“>*Ode*<”> and other valuable short poems, which might otherwise have been lost. From that day he gave me permission to copy any verses he might write, and I fully availed myself of it. He cared so little for them himself, when once, as it appeared to me, his imagination was

released from their influence, that it required a friend at hand to preserve them.

We passed much of this summer at Shanklin in the Isle of Wight, and at Winchester. He was pleased with the quiet of that cathedral town, the beauty of the cathedral itself, and the elm-tree walks. We knew no one there. At Shanklin he undertook a difficult task: I engaged to furnish him with the fable, characters, and dramatic conduct of a tragedy, and he was to embody it into poetry. The progress of this work was curious; for, while I sat opposite to him, he caught my description of each scene, entered into the characters to be brought forward, the events, and every thing connected with it. Thus he went on, scene after scene, never knowing nor inquiring into the scene which was to follow, until four acts were completed. It was then he required to know, at once, all the events which were to occupy the fifth act. I explained them to him; but, after a patient hearing, and some thought, he insisted on it that my incidents were too numerous, and, as he termed them, too melodramatic. He wrote the fifth act in accordance with his own view; and so enchanted was I with his poetry, that, at the time, and for a long time after, I thought he was in the right. This tragedy, <“>*Otho the great*<”>, was sent to Drury Lane Theatre, not with his name, for (strange it now appears!) his name was not a recommendation, so utterly had it become a by-word of reproach in literature. It was, however, accepted, with a promise on the part of Elliston to bring it forward during that very season. From what I could learn, by an inadvertence of Elliston, it was Kean, to whom it was shown, who desired to play the principal character. Afterwards I was told I had mistaken the promise,—it was for the next season if possible, or for the season after the next. This delay did not suit my purpose, which was to make my friend popular in spite of his detractors. I therefore took it from that theatre, and sent it to Covent Garden

Theatre, whence it was speedily returned with a note, in a boy's hand-writing, containing a negative. I have since had reason to believe it never was unrolled.

As soon as Keats had finished <">*Otho the great*<">, I pointed out to him a subject for an english historical tragedy in the reign of Stephen, beginning with his defeat by the Empress Maud, and ending with the death of his son Eustace, when Stephen yielded the succession to the crown to the young Henry. He was struck with the variety of events and characters which must necessarily be introduced; and I offered²⁰ to give, as before, their dramatic conduct. "The play must open", I began, "with the field of battle, when Stephen's forces are retreating—" "Stop!" he said, "stop! I have been already too long in leading-strings. I will do all this myself." He immediately set about it, and wrote two or three scenes, about 130 lines.

This second tragedy, never to be resumed, gave place to "*Lamia*", a poem which had been on hand for some months. He wrote it with great care, after much study²¹ of Dryden's versification.

I left him alone in Winchester for about three weeks, for he objected to accompany me. His intention was, though he by no means expressed it, to make a trial of solitude. Just before he might have expected my²² return, I was surprised by a letter, dated 23 September 1819,²³ from which the following is an extract. There was a time when I might have omitted some passages in this extract respecting myself; but I have become, year after year, more and more proud of his good opinion. Besides, it must not be conjectured that he thought of parting from me on any other ground than is here mentioned.

²⁰ *B* offered.

²¹ *B* studying.

²² Originally me to.

²³ In *Letters*, pp. 395f., the text is given from Milnes, II, 27-30, not direct from Brown.

"Now I am going to enter on the subject of self. It is quite time I should set myself doing something, and live no longer upon hopes. I have never yet exerted myself. I am getting into an idle minded, vicious way of life, almost content to live upon others. In no period of my life have I acted with any self will, but in throwing up the apothecary-profession. That I do not repent of. Look at x x x x x x : ²⁴ if he was not in the law he would be acquiring, by his abilities, something towards his support. My occupation is entirely literary; I will do so too. I will write, on the liberal side of the question, for whoever will pay me. I have not known yet what it is to be diligent. I purpose ²⁵ living in town in a cheap lodging, and endeavouring, for a beginning, to get the theatricals of some paper. When I can afford to compose deliberate poems I will. I shall be in expectation of an answer to this. Look on my side of the question. I am convinced I am right. Suppose the Tragedy should succeed,—there will be no harm done. And here I will take an opportunity of making a remark or two on our friendship, and all your good offices to me. I have a natural timidity of mind in these matters: liking better to take the feeling <for> between us for granted, than to speak of it. But, good God! what a short while you have known me! I feel it a sort of duty ²⁶ thus to recapitulate, however unpleasant it may be to you. You have been living for others more than any man I know. This is a vexation to me; because it has been depriving you, in the very prime of your life, of pleasures which it was your duty to procure. As I am speaking in general terms this may appear nonsense; you perhaps will not understand it: but if you can go over, day by day, any month of the last year,—you

²⁴ Reynolds.

²⁵ *B* propose.

²⁶ A word (thus or then?) is canceled here.

will know what I mean. On the whole, however, this is a subject that I cannot express myself upon. I speculate upon it frequently; and, believe me, the end of my speculations is always an anxiety for your happiness. This anxiety will not be one of the least incitements to the plan I purpose pursuing. I had got into a habit of mind of looking towards you as a help in all difficulties. This very habit would be the parent of idleness and difficulties. You will see it is a duty I owe myself to break the neck of it. I do nothing for my subsistence—make no exertion. At the end of another year, you shall applaud me,—not for verses, but for conduct. If you live at Hampstead next winter <I>—I like x x x x x x x x and I cannot help it. On that account I had better not live there. While I have some immediate cash, I had better settle myself quietly, and fag on as others do. I shall apply to Hazlitt, who knows the market as well as any one, for something to bring me in a few pounds as soon as possible. I shall not suffer my pride to hinder me. The whisper may go round; I shall not hear it. If I can get an article in the “Edinburg”, I will. One must not be delicate. Nor let this disturb you longer than a moment. I look forward, with a good hope, that we shall <be> one day be passing free, untrammelled, unanxious time together. That can never be if I continue a dead lump. x x x x x x x x x x x x I shall be expecting anxiously an answer from you. If it does not arrive in a few days, this will have miscarried, and I shall come straight to x x x x before I go to town, which you, I am sure, will agree had better be done while I still have some ready cash. By the middle of October I shall expect you in London. We will then set at the Theatres. If you have any thing to gainsay, I shall be even as the deaf adder which stoppeth her ears.”

On the same day he wrote another letter,²⁷ having re-

²⁷ In *Letters*, pp. 396f., the text is given from Milnes, II, 30f.

ceived one from me ²⁸ between the writing of <the> his two. He again spoke of his purpose.

"Do not suffer me to disturb you unpleasantly: I do not mean that you should not ²⁹ suffer me to occupy your thoughts, but to occupy them pleasantly; for, I assure you, I am as far from being unhappy as possible. Imaginary grievances have always been <my> more my torment than real ones. You know this well. Real ones will never have any other effect upon me than to stimulate me to get out of or avoid them. This is easily accounted for. Our imaginary woes are conjured up by our passions, and are fostered by passionate feeling; our real ones come of themselves, and are opposed by an abstract exertion of mind. Real grievances are displacers of passion. The imaginary nail a man down for a sufferer, as on a cross; the real spur him up into an agent. I wish, at one view, you could see my heart towards you. 'Tis only from a high tone of feeling that I can put that word upon paper—out of poetry. I ought to have waited for your answer to my last before I <send> wrote this. I felt, however, compelled to make a rejoinder to your's. I had written to x x x x ³⁰ on the subject of my last,—I scarcely know whether I shall send my letter now. I think he would approve of my plan; it is so evident. Nay, I am convinced, out and out, that by prosing for awhile in periodical works I may maintain myself decently."

I set ³¹ off immediately to him, and we returned to town together. Up to that period he had always expressed himself averse to writing for any periodical work. The only contribution he ever made of this kind was to the "Champion" newspaper, in a short notice of Kean's performance of Luke in "The

²⁸ For Keats's reference to it see *Letters*, pp. 425f.

²⁹ *B* omits.

³⁰ *Letters*, p. 397, *prints* written to Dilke.

³¹ *Originally* sat (?).

city madam." As his poems were, to the disgrace of his contemporaries, unprofitable, in which sense alone his time had been spent idly, and as I was well acquainted with his independent feeling, there was no part of his plan but what met with my concurrence, except the loss of his society. On this subject he heard me patiently, but concluded with insisting on the necessity of his living in a lodging in town, and by himself. He actually carried his plan into effect, not aware, as I was, of his incapability of living in solitude, and distant from the young lady in Hampstead who had won his heart. He remained in his new lodging two days (I think no more) and lived again with me. He appeared to have relinquished his intention of writing in periodical works. Probably he found his aversion to such a task insuperable.

It was evident from the letters he had sent me, even in his self-deceived assurance that he was "as far from being unhappy as possible", that he was unhappy. I quickly perceived he was more so than I had feared; his abstraction, his occasional lassitude of mind, and, frequently, his assumed tranquillity of countenance gave me great ³²

Nº 2

Life of

John Keats:

by

Charles Armitage Brown.

me great uneasiness. He was unwilling to speak on the subject; and I could do no more than attempt, indirectly, to cheer him with hope, avoiding that word however. By chance our con-

³² The page ending here is followed by a second title page, after which on a new page the biography is continued.

versation turned on the idea of a comic faery poem in the Spenser stanza, and I was glad to encourage it. He had not composed many stanzas before he proceeded in it with spirit. It was to be published under the feigned authorship of Lucy Vaughan Lloyd, and to bear the title of <">*The Cap and Bells*<">, or, which he preferred, <">*The Jealousies*<">. This occupied his mornings pleasantly. He wrote it with the greatest facility; in one instance I remember having copied (for I copied as he wrote) as many as twelve stanzas before dinner. In the evenings, at his own desire, he was alone in a separate sitting-room, deeply engaged in remodelling his poem of "Hyperion" into a "Vision." The change in the conduct of this poem has not, in the opinion of his friends, been regarded as an improvement.

This morning and evening employment was broken into by a circumstance which it is needless to mention. He could not resume that employment, and he became dreadfully unhappy. His hopes of fame, and other more tender hopes were blighted. His patrimony, though much consumed in a profession he was compelled to relinquish, might have upheld him through the storm, had he not imprudently lost a part of it in generous loans. Prudence, in the vulgar acceptation of that virtue, is the <forbearance from> leaving one vice for another of economy; or it is sheer selfishness. Now he had no vice; but he was as far removed from a selfish being as can be imagined. Indeed he possessed the noble virtues of friendship and generosity to excess; and they, in this world, may chance to spoil a man of independent feeling, till he is destitute. Even the "immediate cash", of which he spoke in the extracts I have given from his letters, was lent, with no hope of its speedy repayment, and he was left worse than pennyless. All that a friend could say, or offer, or urge was not enough to heal his many wounds. He listened, and, in kindness, or soothed by kindness, showed tran-

quillity, but nothing from a friend could relieve him, except on a matter of inferior trouble.

He was too thoughtful, or too unquiet; and he began to be reckless of health. Among other proofs of recklessness, he was secretly taking, at times, a few drops of laudanum to keep up his spirits. It was discovered by accident, and, without delay, revealed to me. He needed not to be warned of the danger of such a habit; but I rejoiced at his promise never to take another drop without my knowledge; for nothing could induce him to break his word, when once given,—which was a difficulty. Still, at the very moment of my being rejoiced, this was an additional proof of his rooted misery.

Not long after this, one night—(I have no record of the date, but it was either at the end of December or the beginning of January,)—one night, at eleven o'clock, he came into the house in a state that looked like <fearful> fierce intoxication. Such a state in him, I knew, was impossible; it therefore was the more fearful. I asked hurriedly, "What is the matter?—you are fevered?" "Yes, yes," he answered, "I was on the outside of the stage this bitter day till I was severely chilled,—but now I don't feel it. Fevered!—of course, a little." He mildly and instantly yielded, a property in his nature towards any friend, to my request that he should go to bed. I followed with the best immediate remedy in my power. I entered his chamber as he leapt into bed. On entering the cold sheets, before his head was on the pillow, he slightly coughed, and I heard him say,—“That is blood from my mouth.” I went towards him; he was examining a single drop of blood upon the sheet. “Bring me the candle, Brown; and let me see this blood.” After regarding it steadfastly, he looked up in my face, with a calmness of countenance that I can never forget, <and> and said,—“I know the colour of that blood;—it is arterial blood;—I cannot be deceived in that

colour;—that drop of blood is my death-warrant;—I must die.” I ran for a surgeon; my friend was bled; and, at five in the morning, I left him after he had been, some time, in a quiet sleep.

His surgeon and physician both unhesitatingly declared that his lungs were uninjured. This satisfied me, but not him: he could not reconcile the colour of that blood with their favourable opinion. He was long ill, and, at one period, unable to bear the presence of any one except his medical attendant and myself. I am inclined to think that nobleness of mind shows more gloriously in receiving than in giving. While I waited on him, day and night, his instinctive generosity, his acceptance of my offices, by a glance of his eye, a motion of his hand, made me regard my mechanical duty as absolutely nothing compared to his silent acknowledgment. Something like this, Severn, his last nurse, observed to me; and I am convinced it was an innate virtue in him to make those who most obliged him the most obliged, without effort, without a thought, well nigh magical. I recollect his once saying,—“If you would have me recover, flatter me with a hope of happiness when I shall be well; for I am now so weak that I can be flattered into hope.”

With the spring his strength ³³ and, apparently, his former health returned. So much so, that his physician even recommended him to join me in another walking tour to the highlands; but neither he nor I, knowing what privations and bad weather he might endure there, was of the same opinion. I went alone. It was his choice, during my absence, to lodge at Kentish Town, that he might be near his friend, Leigh Hunt, in whose companionship he was ever happy. He went with me in the scotch smack as far as Gravesend. This was on the 7th May. I never saw him afterwards.

As evidence of his well being I had requested him to send me some new stanzas to his comic faery poem; for, since his

³³ A comma is deleted here.

illness, he had not dared the exertion of <writing> composing. At the end of eight days he wrote in good spirits, and began his letter thus: ³⁴

"My dear Brown,

You must not expect me to date my letter from such a place as this: you have heard the name; that is sufficient, except merely to tell you it is the 15th instant. You know I was very well in the smack; I have continued much the same, and am well enough to extract much more pleasure than pain out of the summer, even though I should get no better. I shall not say a word about the stanza you promised yourself through my medium, and will swear, at some future time, I promised. Let us hope I may send you more than one in my next." x x x x x x x

In June he wrote as follows; ³⁵ and what I heard from other quarters also tended to confirm my best hopes.

"My dear Brown,

I have only been to x x x's ³⁶ once since you left, when x x x x could not find your letters. Now this is bad of me. I should, in this instance, conquer the great aversion to breaking up my regular habits, which grows upon me more and more. True I have an excuse in the weather, which drives one from shelter to shelter in any little excursion. I have not heard from George. My book (* Note) is coming out with very low hopes, though not spirits on my part. This shall be my last trial; not succeeding, I shall try what I can do in the Apothecary line. When you hear from or see x x x x x x it is probable you will (* Note) Lamia, Isabella, The eve of Saint Agnes, and other poems.

³⁴ In *Letters*, p. 489, the text is given from Coventry Patmore's transcript of the present letter.

³⁵ In *Letters*, pp. 492f., the text is given from Milnes, II, 62-64, not direct from Brown.

³⁶ *B* suggests Dilke's.

hear some complaints against me, which this notice is not intended to forestall. The fact is I did behave badly; but it is to be attributed to my health, spirits, and the disadvantageous ground I stand on in society. I would go and accommodate matters, if I were not too weary of the world. I know that they are more happy and comfortable than I am; therefore why should I trouble myself about it? I foresee I shall know very few people in the course of a year or two. Men get such different ³⁷ habits, that they become as oil and vinegar to one another. Thus far I have a consciousness of having been pretty dull and heavy, both in subject and phrase; I might add, enigmatical. I am in the wrong, and the world is in the right, I have no doubt. Fact is, I have had so many kindnesses done me by so many people, that I am cheveux-de-frisé with benefits, which I must jump over or break down. I met x x x ³⁸ in town a few days ago, who invited me to supper to meet Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, Haydon, and some more; I was too careful of my health to risk being out at night. Talking of that, I continue to improve slowly, but, I think, surely. All the talk at present x x x x x x x x There is a famous exhibition in Pall Mall ³⁹ of the old english portraits by Vandyck and Holbein, Sir Peter Lely and the great Sir Godfrey. Pleasant countenances predominate; so I will mention two or three unpleasant ones. There is James the first,—whose appearance would disgrace a "Society for the suppression of women;" so very squalid, and subdued to nothing he looks. Then, there is old Lord Burleigh, the high priest of economy, the political save-all, who has the appearance of a Pharisee just rebuffed by a gospel bon-mot. Then, there is George the second, very like an unintellectual Voltaire, troubled

³⁷ *B* difficult.

³⁸ "Crabb Robinson records an evening spent at Monkhouse's on June 21, 1820, when Lamb, Wordsworth, and Talfourd were present" (*Letters*, p. 493n.).

³⁹ At the British Institution, June, 1820: see *Letters*, p. 493n.

with the gout and a bad temper. Then, there is young Devereux, the favourite, with every appearance of as slang a boxer as any in the court; his face is cast in the mould of blackguardism with jockey-plaster. x x x x I shall soon begin <with> upon <">Lucy Vaughan Lloyd<">. I do not begin composition yet, being willing, in case of a relapse, to have nothing to reproach myself with. I hope the weather will give you the slip; let it show itself, and steal out of your company.⁴⁰ x x x x x x When I have sent off this, I shall write another to some place about fifty miles in advance of you.

Good morning to you.

Your's ever sincerely,

John Keats."

During a pedestrian tour, though every care is beforehand taken for the direction of letters, at particular times, and to particular places, somehow, either by inattention or error, mistakes abound. I walked on, disappointed from one post-office to another, till 9th September, when, at Dunkeld, I received letters forwarded from various parts of the Highlands, among which were two from Keats. The first was written on 14th August, and the second a few days after.⁴¹ On reading them, I turned my steps undeviatingly homewards.

"My dear Brown,

You may not have heard from x x x x or x x x x, or in any way, that an attack of spitting of blood, and all its weakening consequences, has prevented me from writing for so long a time. I have matter now for a very long letter, but not news; so I must cut every thing short. I shall make some confession, which you will be the only person, for many reasons, I shall

⁴⁰ *Letters*, p. 493n., cites *Much Ado about Nothing*, III.iii.63f.

⁴¹ In *Letters*, pp. 514, 516f., the text of both letters is given from Milnes, II, 64f., 67, not direct from Brown, with the dates of "August 20, 1820," and "August, 1820."

as the cold winds begin to blow towards evening;—but I will wait till I have your answer to this. I am to be introduced, before I set out, to a Dr Clarke, a physician settled at Rome, who promises to befriend me in every way at Rome. The sale of my book is very slow, though it has been very highly rated. One of the causes, I understand from different quarters, of the unpopularity of this new book, and the others also, is the offence the ladies take at me. On thinking that matter over, I am certain that I have said nothing in a spirit to displease any woman I would care to please: but still there is a tendency to class women in my books with roses and sweetmeats,—they never see themselves dominant. * (Note) If ever I come to publish “Lucy Vaughan Lloyd”, there will be some delicate picking for squeamish stomachs. I will say no more, but, waiting in anxiety for your answer, doff my hat, and make a purse as long as I can.

Your affectionate friend,

John Keats.”

On my arrival at Dundee, a smack was ready to sail, and with a fair wind. Yet I was one day too late. Unknown to each other at the time, our vessels lay, side by side, at Gravesend; ⁴³

* (Note) On what grounds can this opinion rest? Is not “Isabella” dominant <to> to an extreme, <?> in affection and in heroism? Are not his other poetic women mentally dominant, only in a minor degree? As for what he says respecting his poem by the supposed “Lucy Vaughan Lloyd”, there is nothing in the fragment he has left, nothing in the intended construction of the story, (for I knew all, and was to assist him in the machinery of one part,) but to the honour of women. Lord Byron, really popular among women, reduced them, to the offence of some men, to “roses and sweetmeats.”

⁴³ See *Letters*, p. 519n.

for he had been recommended to go to Italy by sea, and was then on the first night of his voyage.

In my absence, while the autumn was too far advancing, a dear friend, Joseph Severn, almost at a day's warning,⁴⁴ accompanied him. Severn had gained the gold medal at the Royal Academy for the best historical picture among the students, and therefore was entitled to his expences to and from Italy, as well as for three years of study there. Our Keats could not be in more affectionate hands; and I contented myself with preparing to follow him very early in the spring, and not return, should he prefer to live there. I thought of nothing but his recovery; for all the medical men who attended him were constant in their assertions that his lungs were uninjured;⁴⁵ and his mind, I hoped, by change of scene, and renewed strength of body, would become tranquil.

Again we were within ten miles of each other, still without knowing it at the time. Contrary winds had driven him back to Portsmouth, where he landed for a day, while I chanced to be in the neighbourhood. I received this letter ⁴⁶ from him.

Maria Crowther. Off Yarmouth, Isle of Wight.

Saturday. 28 September.

My dear Brown,

The time has not yet come for a pleasant letter from me. I have delayed writing to you from time to time, because I felt how impossible it was to enliven you with one heartening hope of my recovery. This morning in bed the matter struck me in a different manner: I thought I would write "while I was in some liking," ⁴⁷ or I might become too ill to write at all, and

⁴⁴ See I, 140.

⁴⁵ *B* uninjured.

⁴⁶ The text in *Letters*, pp. 519-521, comes from the holograph at Harvard, and differs somewhat from this version. It is dated Saturday, that is, September 30.

⁴⁷ *Letters*, p. 519n., cites *I Henry IV*, III.iii.6.

then, if the desire to have written should become strong, it would be a great affliction to me I have many more letters to write, and I bless my stars that I have begun, for time seems to press,—<I may> this may be my last opportunity. We are in a calm, and I am easy enough this morning. If my spirits seem too low, you may, in some degree, impute it to our having been at sea a fortnight without making any way. I was very disappointed at not meeting you at Bedhampton, and am very provoked at the thought of your ⁴⁸ being at Chichester to-day. I should have delighted in setting off for London, for the sensation merely,—for what should I do there? I could not leave my stomach, or lungs, or other worse things behind me. I wish to write on subjects that will not agitate me much,—there is one I must mention, and have done with it. Even if my body would recover of itself, this would prevent it. The very thing I want to live most for will be a great occasion of my death. I cannot help it. Who can help it? Were I in health it would make me ill, and how can I bear it in my state? I dare say you will be able to guess on what subject I am harping. You know what was my greatest pain during the first part of my illness at your house. I wish for death every day and night to deliver me from these pains, and then I wish death away, for death would destroy even those pains which are better than nothing. Land and sea, weakness and decline are great separators, but death is the great divorcer for ever. When the pang of this thought has passed through my mind, I may say the bitterness of death is passed. I often wish for you, that you might flatter me with the best. I think, without my mentioning it, for my sake you would be a friend to x x x x ⁴⁹ when I am dead. If there is any thing you can do for her by word or deed, I know you will do it. I am in a state at present in which woman,

⁴⁸ B you.

⁴⁹ *The holograph has Miss Brawne.*

merely as woman, can have no more power over me than stocks and stones, and yet the difference of my sensations with respect to her and my sister is amazing. The one seems to absorb the other to a degree incredible. The thought of leaving her is beyond every thing horrible—the sense of darkness coming over me! I eternally see her figure eternally vanishing. Some of the phrases she was in the habit of using, during my last <illness> nursing, ring in my ears. Is there another life? Shall I awake and find all this a dream? There must be: we cannot be created for this sort of suffering;—the receiving this letter is to be one of your's! I will say nothing about our friendship, or rather your's to me, more than that, as you deserve to escape, you will never be so unhappy as I am. I should think of you in my last moments. I shall endeavour to write to her,—if possible to-day. A sudden stop to my life in the middle of one of these letters would be no bad thing, for it keeps me⁵⁰ in a sort of fever awhile. Though fatigued with a letter longer than any I have written for a long while, it would be better to go on for ever than awake to a sense of contrary winds. We expect to put into Portland roads to-night. The captain, the crew, and the passengers are all ill tempered and weary. I shall write to x x x⁵¹ I feel as if I was closing my last letter to you.

My dear Brown,

Your affectionate friend,

John Keats."

I make no comment on this, nor shall I on two more letters⁵² from him; I cannot. Besides, what have the admirers of his poems and his character <except> to do except with him alone, and to sympathise with his sufferings? <alone?>

⁵⁰ *B* one.

⁵¹ *The holograph has dilke.*

⁵² In *Letters*, pp. 523-527, the text of both letters is said to be given from Milnes, II, 77-79, 82-84, but the first is printed direct from Brown.

Another's would be discordant. His next was written when he had arrived at the end of his voyage.

"Naples. Wednesday first in November.

My dear Brown,

Yesterday we were let out of Quarantine, during which my health suffered more from bad air and a stifled cabin than it had done the whole voyage. The fresh air revived me a little, and I hope I am well enough this morning to write to you a short calm letter;—if that can be called one, in which I am afraid to speak of what I would the faintest dwell upon. As I have gone thus far into it, I must go on a little;—perhaps it may relieve the load of WRETCHEDNESS which presses upon me. The persuasion that I shall see her no more will kill me. I cannot q—— * (Note) My dear Brown, I should have had her when I was in health, and I should have remained well. I can bear to die— I cannot bear to leave her. Oh, God! God! God! Every thing I have in my trunks that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear. The silk lining she put in my travelling cap scalds my head. My imagination is horribly vivid about her— I see her— I hear her. There is nothing in the world of sufficient interest to divert me from her a moment. This was the case when I was in England; I cannot recollect, without shuddering, the time that I was prisoner at Hunt's, and used to keep my eyes fixed on Hampstead all day. Then there was a good hope of seeing her again— Now!— O that I could be buried near where she lives! I am afraid to write to her—to receive a letter from her—to see her hand writing would break my heart—even to hear of her any how, to see her name written would be more than I can bear. My dear Brown, what am I to do? Where can I look for consolation or ease? If I had

* (Note) He could not go on with this sentence, nor even write the word "quit",—as I suppose. The word WRETCHEDNESS above he himself wrote in large characters.

any chance of recovery, this passion would kill me. Indeed through the whole of my illness, both at your house and at Kentish Town, this fever has never ceased wearing me out. When you write to me, which you will do immediately, write to Rome (*poste restante*)—if she is well and happy, put a mark thus +, — if— Remember me to all. I will endeavour to bear my miseries patiently. A person in my state of health should⁵³ not have such miseries to bear. Write a short note to my sister, saying you have heard from me. Severn is very well. If I were in better health I should urge your coming to Rome. I fear there is no one can give me any comfort. Is there any news of George? O, that something fortunate had ever happened to me or my brothers!—then I might hope,—but despair is forced upon me as a habit. My dear Brown, for my sake, be her advocate for ever. I cannot say a word about Naples; I do not feel at all concerned in the thousand novelties around me. I am afraid to write to her. I should like her to know that I do not forget her. Oh, Brown, I have coals of fire in my breast. It surprised⁵⁴ me that the human heart is capable of containing and bearing so much misery. Was I born for this end? God bless her, and her mother, and my sister, and George, and his wife, and you, and all!

Your ever affectionate friend,

John Keats.

Thursday. I was a day too early for the courier. He sets out now. I have been more calm to-day, though in a half dread of not continuing so. I said nothing of my health; I know nothing of it; you will hear Severn's account from x x x x x.⁵⁵ I must leave off. You bring my thoughts too near to ———⁵⁶

God bless you!"

⁵³ A letter, perhaps "h," is canceled here.

⁵⁴ B surprises (so in *Letters*, p. 524).

⁵⁵ *Letters supplies in brackets* Haslam.

⁵⁶ *Letters reads to Fanny.*

The pain of this was relieved by the account Severn sent, by the same post,⁵⁷ of his usual tone of mind, and of the opinion of the physicians there,—all positive there was no disease of the lungs. The account, indeed, was cheering and hopeful. Then I heard from Keats himself, when he had reached Rome, in a comparatively happy mood.

“Rome. 30 November 1820.

My dear Brown,

’Tis the most difficult thing in the world <for> to me to write a letter. My stomach continues so bad, that I feel it worse on opening any book,—yet I am much better than I was in Quarantine. Then I am afraid to encounter the proing and conning of any thing interesting to me in England. I have an habitual feeling of my real life having past, and that I am leading a posthumous existence. God knows how it would have been—but it appears to me—however, I will not speak of that subject. I must have been at Bedhampton nearly at the time you were writing to me from Chichester—how unfortunate—and to pass on the river too! There was my star predominant!⁵⁸ I cannot answer any thing in your letter, which followed me from Naples to Rome, because I am afraid to look it over again. I am so weak (in mind) that I cannot bear the sight of any hand writing of a friend I love so much as I do you. Yet I ride the little horse,—and, at my worst, even in Quarantine, summoned up more puns, in a sort of desperation, in one week than in any year of my life. There is one thought enough to kill me— I have been well, healthy, alert &c, walking with her—and now—the knowledge of contrast, feeling for light and shade, all that information (primitive sense) necessary for a poem are great enemies to the recovery of the stomach. There, you

⁵⁷ Probably No. 77, to Haslam.

⁵⁸ *Letters*, p. 526n., cites *All’s Well That Ends Well*, I.i.213f., and *The Winter’s Tale*, I.ii.201f.

rogue, I put you to the torture,—but you must bring your philosophy to bear—as I do mine, really—or how should I be able to live? Dr Clarke is very attentive to me; he says, there is very little the matter with my lungs, but my stomach, he says, is very bad. I am well disappointed in hearing good news from George,—for it runs in my head we shall all die young. I have not written to x x x x x⁵⁹ yet, which he must think very neglectful; being anxious to send him a good account of my health, I have delayed it from week to week. If I recover, I will do all in my power to correct the mistakes made during sickness; and if I should not, all my faults will be forgiven. I shall write to x x x to-morrow, or next day.⁶⁰ I will write to x x x x x in the middle of next week. Severn is very well, though he leads so dull a life with me. Remember me to all friends, and tell x x x x⁶¹ I should not have left London without taking leave of him, but from being so low in body and mind. Write to George as soon as you receive this, and tell him how I am, as far as you can guess;—and also a note to my sister—who⁶² walks about my imagination like a ghost—she is so like Tom. I can scarcely bid you good bye even in a letter. I always made⁶³ an awkward bow.

God bless you!

John Keats.

My hopes, strong till then, were lost on the receipt of the following letter from Severn. I perceived that his physicians had been in error, and that the words of Keats himself, spitting up that one drop of blood,—“That drop of blood is my death-warrant!”—were true.

⁵⁹ *Letters* (following Milnes) reads to Reynolds.

⁶⁰ Milnes and *Letters* omit this sentence and the one following.

⁶¹ Milnes and *Letters* incorrectly read tell Haslam. See I, 149.

⁶² A word (who?) is canceled here.

⁶³ B make.

"Rome. 14 Decèber 1820."⁶⁴

My dear Brown,

I fear our poor Keats is at his worst. A most unlooked for relapse has confined him to his bed, with every chance against him. It has been so sudden upon what I thought convalescence, and without any seeming cause, that I cannot calculate on the next change. I dread it; for his suffering is so great, so continued, and his fortitude so completely gone, that any further change must make him delirious. This is the fifth day, and I see him get worse. But stop,—I will tell you the manner of this relapse from the first.

17 December. 4 Morning. Not a moment can I be from him. I sit by his bed, and read all day,—and, at night, I humour him in all his wanderings. He has just fallen asleep,—the first for eight nights, and now from mere exhaustion. I hope he will not wake <till> until I have written this; for I am anxious, beyond measure, to have you know this his worse and worse state,—yet I dare not let him see I think it dangerous.

I had seen him awake on the morning of this attack, and, to all appearance, he was going on merrily, and had unusual good spirits;—when, in an instant, a cough seized him, and he vomited nearly two cup-fulls⁶⁵ of blood. In a moment I got D^r Clarke, who saw the manner of it, and immediately took away about eight ounces of blood from the arm,—it was black and thick in the extreme. Keats was much alarmed and dejected. Oh! what an awful day I had with him! He rushed out of bed, and said, "This day shall be my last!"—and, but for me, most certainly it would. At the risk of losing his confidence, I took every destroying mean from his reach, nor did I let him be free from my sight one minute. The blood broke forth in like quantity the next morning, and the doctor thought it ex-

⁶⁴ For the original letter see No. 84.

⁶⁵ *Originally* cup-full's.

pedient to take away the like quantity of blood;—this was in the same dismal state, and must have been so, from the horrible state of despair he was in. But I was so fortunate as to talk him into a little calmness, and, with some english newspapers, he became quite patient under the necessary arrangements.

This is the ninth day, and no change for the better. Five times the blood has come up, in coughing, in large quantities, generally in the morning, and nearly the whole time his saliva has been mixed with it. But this is the less evil compared with his stomach. Not a single thing will digest. The torture he suffers all and every night, and best part of the day, is dreadful in the extreme. The distended stomach keeps him in perpetual hunger or craving; and this is augmented by the little nourishment he takes to keep down the blood. Then his mind is worse than all: despair in every shape—his imagination and memory present every thought in horror—so strong that every morning and night I tremble for his intellect—the recollection of England—of his “good friend Brown”—and his “happy few weeks in x x x x x’s⁶⁶ care”—his sister and brother. Oh! he will mourn over every circumstance to me whilst⁶⁷ I cool his burning forehead—until I tremble through every vein—concealing my tears from his staring glassy eyes. How he can be Keats again from all this—I have little hope—but I may see it too gloomily, since each coming night I sit up adds its dismal contents to my mind.

D^r Clarke will not say so much. Altogether there are no bounds to his attention, yet with little success can he “administer to a mind diseased”. Yet, all that can be done, most kindly he does;—whilst his lady, like himself in refined feeling, prepares and cooks all that poor Keats takes;—for in this wilderness of a place (for an invalid) there was no alternative. Yester-

⁶⁶ Mrs. Brawne’s: see I, 177.

⁶⁷ *Originally* while.

day Dr Clarke went all over Rome for a certain kind of fish, and got it; but, just as I received it from Mr Clarke, delicately prepared,—Keats was taken by the spitting of blood—and is now gone back all the eight days. This was occasioned by disobeying the doctor's commands. Keats is required to be kept as low as possible, to check the blood; so that he is weak and gloomy. Every day he raves he will die from hunger, and I was obliged to give more than allowed. You cannot think how dreadful this is for me. The doctor, on one hand, tells me I shall kill him to give more than he allows, and Keats raves for more till I am in a complete tremble for him;—but I have talked him over now. We have the best opinion of Dr Clarke's skill; he seems to understand the case, and comes over four or five times a day. He left word at twelve this morning to call any time in case of danger. For myself, I am keeping up beyond my most sanguine expectation. Eight nights I have been up, and, in the days, never a moment away from my patient, unless to run over to the doctor. But I will confess my spirits have been quite pulled down. These wretched Romans have no idea of comfort. Here am I obliged to wash up, cook, and read to Keats all day. Added to this, I have had no letters yet from my family. x x x x x x x x x Will you, my dear Brown, write to *me*, for a letter to Keats now would almost kill him. Give x x x⁶⁸ this sad news. I am quite exhausted. Farewell. I wish you were here, my dear Brown.

Your's sincerely,

Joseph Severn.

I have just looked at him—this will be a good night."

The tragedy goes on to the last, still in the words of kind hearted Severn.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Haslam: see I, 179.

⁶⁹ Other versions of this letter are printed with many variants by Milnes, II, 89f., who dates its first section February 18, and Sharp, pp. 89f., who says it was written to Mrs. Brawne on February 12. See also Bodurtha, p. 121.

"Rome. 8 February 1821.

My dear Brown,

I have just got your letter of 15th January. The contrast of your quiet friendly Hampstead with this lonely place and our poor suffering Keats brings the tears into my eyes. I wish many, many times that he had never left you. His recovery must have been impossible whilst he was in England, and his excessive grief since has made it more so. In your care he seemed to ⁷⁰ me like an infant in its mother's arms; you would have smoothed down his pain by varieties; his death might have been eased by the presence of his many friends. But here, with one solitary friend, in a place savage for an invalid, he has one more pang added to his many;—for I have had the hardest task in keeping from him my painful situations. I have kept him alive by these means, week after week. He had refused all food; but I tried him every way. I left him no excuse. Often I have prepared his meals six times a day, and kept from him the trouble I had in doing it. I have not been able to leave him,—that is, I have not dared to do it, but when he slept. Had he come here alone, he would have plunged into the grave in secret;—we should never have known one syllable about him. This reflection alone repays me for all I have done. It is impossible to conceive what the sufferings of this poor fellow have been. Now—he is still alive, and calm;—if I say more, I shall say too much. Yet, at times, I have hoped he would recover,—but the doctor shook his head,—and, as for Keats, he would not hear that he was better. The thought of recovery is beyond every thing dreadful to him. We now dare not perceive any improvement; for the hope of death seems his only comfort. He talks of the quiet grave as the first rest he can ever have. I can believe and feel this most truly.

In the last week a great desire for books came across his

⁷⁰ Apparently like an is canceled here.

mind. I got him all the books at hand; and, for three days, this charm lasted on him,—but now it has gone. Yet he is very calm. He is more and more reconciled to his horrible misfortunes.

14th February. Little or no change has taken place since the commencement of this,—except this beautiful one, that his mind is growing to great quietness and peace. I find this change has its rise from the encreasing⁷¹ weakness of his body; but it seems like a delightful sleep to me,—I have been beating about in the tempest of his mind so long. To-night he has talked very much to me, but so easily, that he, at last, fell into a pleasant sleep. He seems to have comfortable dreams, without the nightmare. This will bring on some change,—it cannot be worse,—it may be better. Among the many things he has requested of me to-night, this is the principal one,—that on his grave-stone shall be this,—

HERE LIES ONE WHOSE NAME WAS WRIT IN WATER.⁷²

⁷¹ *B* increasing.

⁷² The page ending here is followed by a third title page, after which on a new page the life is continued. As for the epitaph itself, H. S. Morris (Keats-Shelley Memorial *Bulletin*, No. 2 [1913], pp. 30f.) declared that it was suggested by Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, V.iii, "all your better deeds Shall be in water writ, but this in marble." Blunden, *Shelley and Keats* (1925), p. 79, believes that Keats had in mind Bacon's "Poem on Life," "But limns on water or but writes in dust." But just as likely Keats got the idea from Catullus, LXX,

"sed mulier cupido quod dicit amanti

in vento et rapida scribere oportet aqua";

or George Chapman, *Revenge for Honor*, V.ii,

"Of what frail temper is a woman's weakness!

Words writ in waters have more lasting essence

Than our determinations";

or John Donne's *Elegy XV*, lines 9-11:

"Are vows so cheap with women, or the matter

Whereof they're made, that they are writ in water

And blown away with wind."

N° 3
Life of
John Keats,
by
Charles Armitage Brown.

You will understand this so well, that I need not say a word about it. But, is it not dreadful that he should, with all his misfortunes on his mind, and perhaps wrought up to their climax, end his life without one jot of human happiness? When he first came here, he purchased a copy of Alfieri,—but put it down at the second page,—

“Misera me! sollievo a me non resta

“Altro che il pianto,—ed il pianto è delitto.” ⁷³

He was much affected at this passage; and now that I know so much more of his grief, I do not wonder at it.

Such a letter has come! I gave it to Keats, supposing it to be one of your's,—but it proved sadly otherwise;—the glance of that letter tore him to pieces,—the effects were on him for many days!—he did not read it—he could not—but requested me to place it in his coffin, together with a purse and a letter (unopened) of his sister's—since which time he has requested me *not* to place that letter in his coffin, but only his sister's purse and letter, with some hair. Here he found many causes of his illness in the exciting and thwarting of his passions, but I ⁷⁴ persuaded him to feel otherwise on this delicate point. In his most irritable state, he sees a friendless world, with every thing that his life presents, particularly the kindness of his friends, tending to his untimely death.

⁷³ B refers to Vittorio Alfieri's *Filippo*, I.i.19f.

⁷⁴ B I have.

I have got an English nurse to come two hours every other day, so that I have quite recovered my health; but my nurse, after coming five times, has been taken ill to-day; this is a little unfortunate as Keats seemed to like her. Another and greater misfortune is the cursed rumpus betwixt the Neapolitans and the Austrians. We are daily fearing that the thievish Neapolitans will arrive and ransack Rome. They are on their way hither; and, from the grudge betwixt them and the Romans, we have little to hope for. Rome might be taken with a straw—it is only defended by its relics. At twelve last night they rumbled all their artillery by here to the Porta Santa Giovanna. The Pope was on his legs all night, trusting any thing rather than heaven. If the Austrians do not arrive in time, our P's and Q's are likely to be altered. The English are very numerous here. Farewell.

Sincerely your's

Joseph Severn.

In a little back-room I get chalking out a picture. This, with swallowing a little Italian every day, helps to keep me up. The Doctor was delighted with your kindness to Keats. He is a most worthy man; we must ever respect him for his unremitting kindness to Keats.

P.S. The post does not go for another two hours. To my great astonishment, I found it half past three this morning when I had done writing. You see I cannot do any thing until poor Keats is asleep. This morning he has waked very calm. I think he seems somewhat better. He has taken half a pint of fresh milk. The milk here is beautiful to all the senses—it is delicious—for three weeks he has lived on it, sometimes taking a pint and a half in a day. <Your's>

You astonish me about x x x x x x x¹⁵

The Doctor has been; he thinks Keats worse. He says

¹⁵ B suggests George Keats (citing the unreliable version in Sharp, p. 90).

the expectoration is the most dreadful he ever saw. Keats's inward grief must have been beyond limit. His lungs are in a dreadful state. His stomach has lost all its power. Keats himself says he has fretted to death—from the first little drop of blood he knew he must die—he says no common chance of living was for him."

"Rome. 27 February 1821."⁷⁶

My dear Brown,

He is gone—he died with the most perfect ease—he seemed to go to sleep. On the 23rd, about 4, the approaches of death came on. "Severn—I—lift me up—I am dying—I shall die easy—don't be frightened—be firm, and thank God it has come!" I lifted him up in my arms. The phlegm seemed boiling in his throat, and increased until 11, when he gradually sunk into death—so quiet—that I still thought he slept. I cannot say now—I am broken down from four nights' watching, and no sleep since, and my poor Keats gone. Three days since, the body was opened; the lungs were completely gone. The Doctors could not conceive by what means he had lived these two months. I followed his poor body to the grave on Monday, with many English. They take such care of me here—that <else> I must, else, have gone into a fever. I am better now—but still quite disabled.

The Police have been. The furniture, the walls, the floor, every thing must be destroyed by order of the law. But this is well looked to by Dr C.

The letters I put into the coffin with my own hand.
I must leave off.

J. S.

⁷⁶ Milnes, II, 93f., printed this text with various changes and omissions. Severn's unfinished first draft of the letter is printed in part by Sharp, p. 94, and (with a facsimile) by Rennell Rodd and H. N. Gay, *Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin*, No. 1 (1910), pp. 42f.

This <comes> goes by the first post. Some of my kind friends would have written else. I will try to write you every thing next post; or the Doctor will.

They had a mask—and hand and foot done—
I cannot get on——”

These details of suffering and death may be called by the public an infliction of unnecessary pain. Not so; the public, the countrymen of a poet, <whom> whose merit, either from ignorance or credulity, carelessness or caprice, they did not choose to acknowledge, cannot be too minutely made acquainted with the consequences of their neglect.

After <many> twenty years, with all the charity of which my nature is capable, my belief continues to be that he was destroyed by hirelings, under the imposing name of Reviewers.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Whether Brown was right probably never will be settled. The unrepentant *Blackwood's* made several pronouncements on the matter. In September, 1824 (XVI, 288), it remarked: "The brains of him who imagines that Keats or anybody else was killed by the strictures of Mr Murray's Review, must be madness itself." Again, in September, 1829 (XXVI, 525), it said: "But we killed Keates. There again you—lie. Hunt, Hazlitt, and the godless gang, slavered him to death. Bitterly did he confess that, in his last days, in language stronger than we wish to use; and the wretches would now accuse us of the murder of that poor youth, by a few harmless stripes of that rod, which 'whoever spareth injureth the child.'" . . . Nearly a hundred years later Swinburne, in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (1911), declared that the idea of Keats's having been killed by the reviewers "fell to dust at once for ever on the appearance of Lord Houghton's biography," but he was wrong. Bodurtha, p. 27, asserts that "the critical attacks were the starting-point for his [Keats's] melancholia; they therefore must be regarded, as Brown said, as important contributory causes of his death." Bodurtha also says that "Brown's opinion was shared . . . by all of Keats's intimate friends who expressed an opinion on the subject except Clarke and Severn." To the exceptions should be added Stephens (see II, 212f.), Mathew (see II, 214f.), Bailey (see II, 290f.), and Dilke. The last, writing in the *Athenaeum*, August 4, 1832, p. 502, declared: "Lord Byron's opinion, that he [Keats] was killed by the reviewers, is wholly ridiculous; though

Consumption, it may be urged, was in the family; his father ⁷⁸ and his younger brother had both died of it; therefore, his fate was inevitable. Perhaps it was so; perhaps not. The brother who died was very tall and very ⁷⁹ narrow chested; our Keats was short, with well-proportioned limbs, and with a chest remarkably well-formed for strength. At the most, it comes to this: if an hereditary predisposition existed, that predisposition might not have been called into action, except by an outrageous denial of his now acknowledged claim to be ranked as a poet of England. Month after month, an accumulation of ridicule and scoffs against his character and person, did worse than tear food from the mouth of a starving wretch, for it tore honour from the poet's brow. Could he have been less sensitive, could he have been less independent, could he have truckled to his self-constituted judges, could he have flattered the taste of the public, and pandered to their will and pleasure—in fact, could he have ceased to be John Keats, he might have <been alive> existed at this moment, <as> happy as one of the inferior animals of the creation.

As a critic on his poems, I confess myself incapable. <While> I have purposely refrained from the task. While alive to their beauties, I am conscious of not being so to their faults. Time has not allayed my admiration. <To> To dwell alone upon the beauties of his works is ample joy, and I seek not to have it diminished. Upon this subject I have but one observation to offer: he was, from the first day he became a

his epitaph, and the angry feelings of his friends, might seem to countenance it. Keats died of hereditary consumption, and was fast sinking before either *Blackwood* or the *Quarterly* poured out their malignant venom." In "Keats's Conscious and Unconscious Reactions to Criticisms of *Endymion*" (*PMLA*, LX [1945], 1106-1129) H. E. Briggs reaches conclusions like Brown's.

⁷⁸ An error: see I, 304.

⁷⁹ *B* omits.

poet, in progressive improvement. To this his poems bear witness. How high, had he not been destroyed by hirelings or disease, his genius might have soared, is a thought that at once exalts and depresses me.⁸⁰

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JOSEPH SEVERN TO JOHN TAYLOR

March 1841(?)¹

A few sentences are quoted by Blunden, p. 213.

3 Burlington Gardⁿ
Thursday Mor^t

My dear friend

I am ashamed that the busy life I am leading has prevented me before acknowledging and thanking you for your two very acceptable presents—the dictionary² & the life of Keats— The first seems to me a very fine work & so admirably suited to Rome that I feel compunctious visitings at accepting it in London both as to the use I could have made of it; as well as the service I could have been to my countrymen in recommending it.—However I can still do so to a certain extent & have already shown it to two Anglo-Roman fr^{ds} who will take it back with them

⁸⁰ On the pages that follow Brown copied several of Keats's poems (they are listed by *B*, p. 91, and Garrod, pp. lix-lxi), all of them now in the Harvard Keats Collection. They have a few corrections in Keats's hand.

¹ On his return to England in 1841 (see II, 100) Severn first lived in Burlington Gardens and then at 21 James Street, Buckingham Gate (Sharp, p. 199). In the letter he refers first to the *life* and then to the *edition* of Keats. Evidently he had in mind William Smith's 1841 edition of the poems, which as a frontispiece has Hilton's portrait of Keats "Published by Taylor and Walton . . . 1841." See II, 329.

² Possibly some edition of C. Graglia's pocket dictionary.

The edition of Keats I like much in the beautiful printing & shall tell all my frd^s.— There is a singular error in the portrait ³—Keats's eyes were strikingly large, in the engraving they are singularly small, which takes from the resemblance what it otherwise might have had—his openness & enthusiasm of mind— You might have had the beautiful medallion ⁴ engraved by the french machine which gives a wonderful facsimile of sculpture

The first spare ev^s I shall look for the pleasure of finding you by your fire-side, & assuring you how much I am

Your obliged friend

Joseph Severn

To John Taylor Esq^r

By all means send copies to Sig^r Monaldini of Rome

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CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

29 March 1841

A few sentences are quoted by Bodurtha, pp. 25, 35.

Laira Green, near Plymouth.

29 March 1841.

My dear Sir,

To-day I send to you, by Coach, a parcel containing all Keats's poems ¹ in my possession—all that exist, as far as I am aware. Some have been already published in his volumes. Some, perhaps, or rather certainly, ought not to be published, for

³ See II, 329, for other comments by him on the portrait.

⁴ See II, 221.

¹ See II, 97, note 80.

different reasons—as early attempts, as of too trifling a nature, or as, critically speaking, unworthy of his genius.

A wise selection from a Poet's posthumous writings is the best for his lasting fame. Any other Poet's works I can coolly criticize, from Shakespeare downwards, but I feel there is no cool judgment in me while I am reading any thing by Keats. As soon as I begin to be occupied with his MS poems, or with the *Life* I have written, it forcibly seems to me, against all reason (that is out of the question) that he is sitting by my side, his eyes seriously wandering from me to the papers by turns, and watching my doings. Call it nervousness, if you will; but with this nervous impression, I am unable to do justice to his fame. Could he speak, I would abide by his decision.

You were not his dearest friend, were not personally acquainted with him, and the task you have undertaken will doubtless be pleasure, mingled with regret. Implicitly do I rely on your judgment, as a friend to his fame, and as a brother poet; and gratefully do I acknowledge, in the name of Keats, your good will and kindness.

"Lucy Vaughan Lloyd" ² was written chiefly for amusement; it appeared to be a relaxation; and it was begun without framing laws in his mind for the supernatural. When I noticed certain startling contradictions, his answer used to be—"Never mind, Brown; all those matters will be properly harmonized, before we divide it into Cantos." As failures in wit, I might point out such Stanzas as 16, 17, & 18; yet there is exquisite wit of a peculiar kind in other parts. And there are many enchanting poetical passages. Probably you will publish the fragment with omissions. What can be better than his description of a London hackney-coach?—yet how much misplaced!

In respect to the *Life* I have sent, you say—"I should not

² A pseudonym intended for use with *The Cap and Bells*. The hackney coach is described in stanzas 26-28.

wish to soften any expressions of indignation at the Reviewers, but I might desire to change some of them"; to which you think I shall have no objection. The word "change" puzzles me. To speak truly, I would have no words changed that would change their purport. If I am wrong in my belief, or if the truth ought not to be entirely told, I am, at any rate, true and honest; if my expressions are sometimes too strong, much allowance will be made for one in my situation. I can enter into another demur which, at first thought, you seem to have entertained, but you immediately answered it yourself—"At the same time, if his first efforts had been successful, there is no saying what effects hope and joy might have had on such a temperament as his." That is precisely the question. His absolute disgust, his horror at what he used to call "shabby and glutinous cares" was joined to a firm spirit of independence. My earnest offers pained him, because he feared for me. When I have put it in this way—"I am certain, Keats, that it would prove a capital speculation for me, if you will agree to let me go in your boat; I risk nothing, for we shall be sure to have a prosperous voyage"; he would look serious, and pleased; but, when it came to the point, he would more seriously refuse to let me enter his boat with—"No, that must not be; you were very well before you knew me; and so you must remain—you are not a bookseller!"

Severn has arrived just in time for you—has he not? Should you have any questions to ask of me, and probably there may be some, though I cannot guess at them, you should be early in making them known for me to answer, as the Ship in which I am to depart is appointed to sail at the beginning of May. Carlino sailed in the *Amelia Thompson* on Thursday last (25th) with a moderate and favourable wind.

Your's most sincerely,

Cha^s Brown.

I have not your volume of Poems. When you promised them, did I not say it could be sent through Longman & C^o to Mr May,^{*} Bookseller, Plymouth, for me? It is possible they are not now in business together; but I must have that vol. anyhow, by coach, or by post, or through some trading house.

Briefly as you choose, pray acknowledge the safe arrival of the parcel—for its safety is to me momentous.

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CHARLES BROWN TO R. M. MILNES

9 April 1841

Address: Rich^d M. Milnes Esq^r/ M. P./ Fryston/ Ferrybridge/ Yorkshire. *Postmarks:* PLYMOUTH AP 10 1841 A; FERRY BRIDGE AP 12 1841; *Crabtree Penny Post*. A few words are quoted by Bodurtha, p. 25.

Laira Green. Plymouth.

9 April 1841.

My dear Sir,

In one sense, I can sympathise in your objection; in another, I cannot. Keats quitted surgery for poetry, one profession for another. A poet writes for public opinion, whether brutal or intellectual. He certainly wrote for it, while he held the opinion of the mob in contempt; but he painfully discovered that in the opinion of those, who ought to have been intellectual, he was held in contempt. Suppose that a soldier or a sailor, a lawyer or a clergyman, were hunted down, month after month, by brute public opinion, so as to rob such a person, undeservedly, of the means of an independent livelihood, might it not break a great heart, while it could not break a great spirit? Such, I know, was the fact with Keats. Should it want confirmation, think of the epitaph he directed—"Here

^{*}Daniel May of Bilbury Street, Plymouth, bookseller, stationer, and proprietor of the *Plymouth and Devonport Weekly Journal*.

lies one whose name was writ in water." When you take the high ground of a poet's nobility, I can join with you; but I must recollect that a poet is subject, however noble, to the same animal wants and passions as his inferiors. I can scarcely confide in your judgment on this point, because it crossed my mind while I read your objection—"He talks to me that never feared dependence."¹—excuse me for this, as it was involuntary. To sum up all (as I desire every man should have, and if needful, should express his opinion) pray allow my facts and opinions to stand; and do you, as you may think proper, add to the text your own notes and comments. In this, I think, you will sympathise with me. Not but that I am conscious there was a secondary cause for his fatal attack at my house, on the evening of the very day his brother George left him for America, with more by £20 than Keats possessed, saying, which was repeated to me by himself;—"You, John, have so many friends, they will be sure to take care of you!"—No—I mistake, it was on the evening after that day, that his fatal attack took place,² and the words were repeated with bitterness, and he added—"That was not, Brown, fair—was it?"³ putting me silent from indignation, for alas! the mischief was done!—in keeping his promise (undivulged to me) of assisting him with all the means he had. When I asked Keats why he had kept the promise so secret from me, he answered—"Because I knew you would oppose it, and because your opposition must have been in vain against my promise."

But I am sliding off into a subject, from which I chose to refrain in the Memoir, as irreparable and injurious to the

¹ Adapted from *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii.1.

² George Keats left London for Liverpool on January 28, 1820. The "fatal attack" came on the night of February 3 (Lowell, II, 387-390). See II, 73, where Brown misdates the "fatal attack."

³ Woodhouse's brief notes in the Morgan MS. (Finney, II, 746) perhaps refer to this episode: "Brown, he ought not to have asked me."

brother, though he has provoked me enough by denying that he owed any thing to John Keats, and though I yet keep proofs to the contrary, besides Mr Haslam's evidence. Mr Dilke, an old friend and schoolfellow, chose to quarrel with me on this point, which provoked me still further; yet still I have been silent.

There is only one other thing I have to say, which appeared, and still appears, unnecessary: it is this—a selection from posthumous poems does not include the altering of a word.

You will find a poem in each of my books of copies from his originals of an exceptionable kind; they were written and copied for the purpose of preventing the young blue-stocking ladies from asking for the loan of his MS Poems, and, through fathers and brothers, they had the effect.⁴

Your's most sincerely,
Cha^a Brown.

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C. W. DILKE TO JOSEPH SEVERN

April (?) 1841 ¹

Address: Jos Severn Esqr.

L Gros' P—— Wedy

Dear Sir

I ought to have returned the Memoir ere this—but the subject is to me most unpleasant & I have shrunk from ad-

⁴ Possibly one such poem is No. 42.

¹ Severn's return to England is mentioned above (see II, 100). Evidently after Brown's departure for New Zealand Milnes showed the memoir of Keats (No. 166) to Severn. The latter mentioned it to Dilke, who apparently about March, 1841 (Sharp, p. 199), replied, "I have never seen Brown's 'Memoir.'" Severn then sent it to him for reading and criticism, and twice endorsed his reply, apparently at different times, "Dilke."

verting to it, till I could defer no longer with propriety. Yet the character of the Mem^r is so marked that I am relieved from all difficulty or delicacy in giving it as my opinion that no friend either of Keats' or Brown's—no judicious friend I mean—could be a consenting party to its publication.

Let the Memoir be read by any indifferent person, of refined & educated taste, & let him say whether the publication would tend to raise Keats in public opinion—whether there is any one fact in it relating to *the Poet*, with the exception of the anecdote respecting the Ode to the Nightingale, which any man would be grateful for being informed of. Of course I except the letters which however I am of opinion ought *not* to be published—indeed unless M^r Brown desired that the poor fellows life should 'point a moral' ² in the hands of the Canters [?], I cannot conceive how he could dream of publishing the letter from Naples— Even your own letters, deeply interesting as they were, at the time to anxious friends, contain many things which even friends must be willing to forget, & which could not, without profanation, be breathed into the cold ear of an indifferent public—to say nothing of certain references to M^{rs} L.³ which could not but be deeply painful to her.

But in truth it is no Memoir of Keats, but a Memoir of Brown in his intercourse with Keats—or rather a dream on the subject. Why as to the soul-sympathy which united them at their first meeting, it was not till long after they had met & met often, that Brown became even friendly & familiar with him—he himself says truly, with a vague consciousness of the fact, though he is pleased to draw an odd inferential consequence, that "he never asked him to come to his house." At that time Brown & myself lived in adjoining cottages at Hampstead, & the Keats, John George & Tom, were with me three times a

² Johnson, "The Vanity of Human Wishes," line 222.

³ Fanny Brawne Lindon, or possibly Fanny Llanos.

week, often three times a day, & Brown & Keats were *drawn together* by force of circumstances & position— No one could doubt this who knew both parties *at that time*.—So as to the ‘come live with me’ ⁴ scene—why Brown, from the first hour that he kept house to the last before he left England for New Zealand, & I believe all the time he was in Italy, was accustomed to have people live with him—it helped him to eke out a small income. When therefore Tom died, John was glad, both for economy & company, to board with Brown—but he was charged for his board, & when he died Brown *sent in a Bill, with interest charged* on it, to George & both principal & interest were paid by me.⁵ Yet Brown figures here as a sort of munificent patron friend—an only friend indeed, except yourself. How is this. Had poor Keats, to use his own words “no friend and brother” ⁶—? Was not John Reynolds who knew him first & best, a friend? To whom was Robin Hood addressed ⁷ & why? Facts needful to be told for the mere illucidation of the Poems. Were not the Brawne’s his friends? Was not James Rice his friend? The impression left by this Memoir is altogether delusive. There was not one of us at that time in a position to play the magnanimous—if we had no other pretensions to literature we wore the badge of the tribe. Why the tragedy which Brown here says he was so anxious to have brought out “to make my friend popular in spite of his detractors” was a joint money speculation, projected on the faith of Brown’s presumed knowledge of stage effects, & *Brown stipulated for half the profits*. Pray understand that I do not urge this against Brown, but *against the Memoir*— Brown & Keats were struggling men & equally wanted all the profits that might result from their

⁴ Referring to Christopher Marlowe’s lyric.

⁵ See II, 337.

⁶ See “To My Brother George,” line 109.

⁷ To Reynolds.

literary labors. But in proof of Brown's utter obliviousness, or which is equally probable, his late acquaintance with Keats, he is indignant with the hireling (!) in Blackwood who said he was effeminate in his dress, without a neckcloth &c '*the direct reverse of truth.*' Now ask yourself whether the description of the writer in Blackwood or the *direct reverse* be nearest the truth. As a painter you were probably an observer of such externals—at any rate there is y^r own miniature to refresh memory—and yet at the time that was taken *the black riband*, had given way to a neck cloth, & the neck cloth had found room for a small stiffener, & the hair had been curtailed of its fair proportions.⁸ But why should such absurd trifles be referred to—yet if they must be why should his biographer assert what might indeed be called the direct reverse &c But M^r Brown's memory appears altogether to have failed him. Then⁹ of the Poems which he quotes as MS treasures, for except *as manuscripts* there is no special reason why they should be quoted at all, *some have appeared in Keats' works*, & others were published by Brown himself years since in the New Monthly.¹⁰

I will now conclude— Enough has been said for a judgement, though much remains unsaid in the way of objection. I have however spoken freely because I spoke to a friend of M^r Brown's—

I am Dear Sir

Yours truly

C W Dilke

⁸ Keats *did* dress in an extremely odd manner: see Hewlett, p. 123, and Blunden, p. 41.

⁹ *Perhaps* Thus.

¹⁰ As in IV (1822), 47f., 252.

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GEORGE KEATS TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE ¹

4 July 1841

Address: Paid/ Rev^d Ja^s F. Clarke/ Boston/ Massachusetts. Postmark: LOUISVILLE KY. JUL 5. Printed by Madeleine B. Stern (S), PMLA, LVI (1941), 215-218. Some of her verbal variants are given in footnotes.

Louisville July 4. 1841.

My dear Sir

Although I have always lived in those pleasant places where "bells do toll to church" ² I am not "a church goer" Since Mr Haywood ³ is absent, and his pulpit has no one to him succeeding, and your Breckinridge's ⁴ and your Jackson's ⁵ are well furnished in their *gothic* Churches with listeners, I may as well employ this independence Sunday in preaching to a pastor on the importance of performing properly and promptly all promises, particularly, as I feel some little pleasure that my prophecy on that matter of punctual correspondence is fulfilled by the event. It is said men can talk better against faults of which they themselves are guilty than any others, so I recom-

¹ See II, 35. Harvard also has a transcript of the letter made by Louis A. Holman in 1935.

² Compare *As You Like It*, II.vii.114, "where bells have knoll'd to church," and Keats's sonnet, "The church bells toll a melancholy round."

³ See II, 41n.

⁴ S identifies him as Robert J. Breckenridge, Presbyterian minister and abolitionist, who preached in Louisville in 1836. But according to J. S. Johnston's *Memorial History of Louisville* (n.d.), II, 158, William L. Breckinridge (see II, 113) was the minister referred to.

⁵ "Dr. James Jackson of Boston, the first physician of the Massachusetts General Hospital, . . . a 'scientific unitarian'" (S). But the reference is more likely to William Jackson, of St. Paul's, Louisville (Johnston, II, 143-145).

mend you to address your disciples on the subject of broken promises—

I am afraid you were not pleased with some passages in my last, wherein I undervalued the stirring moral and intellectual excitement now prevailing in Boston, although I still entertain pretty much the same opinions, I will own that your success, the news of which comes to me from various quarters in little bits, is much greater than ⁵ I anticipated, and perhaps if you will tell me all about it I may have more faith in the regenerating nature of the agitation. However little I may be disposed to become a soldeir in the army of reform, I will not fight against what I beleive to be true, so that as a faithful belligerant you are bound to do your best to win me from the old faction. I see in the last messenger an actual beginning to reform the world in the proclamation of the objects of the fraternal ⁶ community by Aden Ballow ⁷ (who is he?) ⁸ I wish the fraternity all success in all their objects because all their objects seem to me good, and I think I can insure them against any fining (unless as non attending Jurors or militia men in a trifling way not worth fighting about, and which had better be paid as Quakers pay war taxes) imprisonments, slayings,⁹ or persecutions other than all citizens have to endure. They have fixed for themselves a high standard of righteousness, higher than any one I ever knew is capable of living up to; if they should live up to it, or fancy they live up to it, it will be hard for them to keep down the pride that will grow up with their

⁵ *Written* that.

⁶ *S* paternal.

⁷ *S* Adam Ballou.

⁸ Adin Ballou (1803–1890), Universalist clergyman and reformer, founded the Hopedale Community in Massachusetts. His article, "Fraternal Community. Exposition," appeared in the *Western Messenger*, April, 1841 (VIII, 553–560).

⁹ *S* stayings. (George is referring to Ballou's words, p. 559.)

self satisfaction and conscious merit. I suppose most of them are radicals in politics as well as religion, and beleive corporations have no souls and should be suppressed; they are perhaps acting on the presumption that their new corporation has no body (nothing animal in it), that since in old fashioned corporations many souls combined will <proceed> produce *no soul*, a trans[c]endental corporation wherein many bodies are combined will produce no body. If they are half as good as they propose to themselves to be, they will soon "thank God that they are not as those sinners," ¹⁰ and then all their promised "*patient* endurance," and "forgiving spirit" is gone. As an organized body they must have an "*esprit de corps*." A man may be all a christian should be in meekness endurance, patience, long suffering, charity, but a battling, contending, reforming society, cannot. In retiring from the world where every good man always will have a sufficiently wide theatre for the exercise of his benevolence, <where> to a position that he may by combination with others prepare himself "for more vigorous and resistless onsets against the legions of darkness," ¹¹ is in my opinion a grand mistake, it don't even sound like bringing peace and good will to men; I have faith in the improving condition of mankind, by the spread of truth and goodness from man to man, but I should have no faith in a project that should collect all the good in a mass for the purpose of making "vigorous & resistless onsets against the legions of darkness." ¹² Every soul is distinct and different from other souls, its real qualities known to no other soul, and but imperfectly to itself, it cannot be jammed into a mass with other souls to any efficient purpose for consciencious and vigorous action, without yielding a main portion of its identity and making compromises that

¹⁰ Luke 18:11.

¹¹ A quotation from Ballou, p. 560 (S).

¹² The same.

will cripple half its strength. . . . How silly in me to argue a matter I have not studied with such a man as my enquiring and reflecting friend, I should have gone on to the end of my paper prattling on these high matters, if the small space left had not reminded me that I have something to talk about. My son in law ¹³ has received your congratulatory letter, I have not seen it, but I am told it gave much ¹⁴ pleasure to those concerned— Emma lives at M^{rs} Speed's ¹⁵ and conforms with much good sense, and discretion to the habits of the family, and I fondly trust that the alliance will ¹⁶ n{ot} only be the cause of much and enduring happiness to the couple themselves but of satisfaction to both families in every respect; I see no cause to fear any other result. The event was however <was> accompanied as relates to Emma by one alloy that I have thought proper to communicate to you, (in confidence) because I would not be a bruiteer abroad ¹⁷ of the acts and doings of a young lady situated as Miss Ellen Fuller now is especially). The alloy ¹⁸ was a decided quarrel between Emma and that young Lady, so that she did not come to the wedding, or call on Emma after the wedding, her reason ostensibly given to M^{rs} K was because she was not duly consulted about the match, nor apprized early enough when it was to take place, nor invited in a sufficiently special manner. I beleive <than> Emma is perfectly satisfied that her conduct since she has been our guest, has been in so many respects utterly irreconcilable ¹⁹ with good

¹³ Philip Speed (S). The marriage was performed by John H. Heywood, of the First Unitarian Church, on June 9.

¹⁴ S great.

¹⁵ Judge John Speed lived at Farmington, a farm about six miles from Louisville (S).

¹⁶ S omits.

¹⁷ Written aboard.

¹⁸ Written over another word.

¹⁹ S irirconcilable. The *irre* is written over other letters, perhaps *unr*.

feelings²⁰ good taste, or truthfulness that she no longer feels for her that friendship that for sometime bound her, and therefore may not feel much on account of the severance, but she feels strongly that a certain trust was reposed in her by M^{rs} F²¹ & Miss Margaret that she has appeared to forfeit by ceasing her friendly offices to one²² so far from her friends— As far as I am able to judge the fault is altogether, as between them, on the side of Miss F.—I never conceived of a Girl making so many daily sacrifices (for 6 or 8 months) to gratify the wants and whims of another as Emma made for Miss F. her conduct was such that Father Mother and Sister had ground to believe themselves entirely disregarded— It would not become me to detail the thousand occurrences in which Miss F forced upon poor Emma the performance of divided duties. Every thing that her Mother or Georgiana wished her to do Miss F begged, entreated, stormed, and shed tears to prevent her from doing. She ridiculed our acquaintances, found fault with dresses, discouraged the performance of all social duties by trying to prevent a return of visits, shed tears in streams to prevent Emma from going to parties given to celebrate her return home, and in fact threw a damp over the family reunion so completely by the ingenious and acute management of her influence over Emma, that poor Emma was worried to a care worn appearance, and in every respect except an occasional burst of hearty feeling [was] totally unlike her former self. She is now herself again; against all rule of etiquette she called on Miss F. since her marriage was treated rudely and now I hope all ties are broken between them—for I think her unworthy of Emma's self sacrificing friendship— I have thought from time to time of writing to Miss Margaret about her sister who *must* be aware of her char-

²⁰ Or *perhaps* feeling as in S.

²¹ Mrs. Margaret Crane Fuller (S).

²² S offices done.

acter and disposition, which was unfolded to me long before Emma found it out, but I shrank from the ungracious task as I would now from this, but that Emma I know feels distressed at the thought that her conduct in the matter shall be harshly judged by *all* in Boston. She has not expressed any wish that I should write any thing, the thought as the act is all my own.

M^{rs} K joins in respects to your Mother & Sister and to M^{rs} and Miss M. Fuller.—Please to thank Miss Margaret for her kindness in sending M^r Emerson's book,²³ I have read much of it with great pleasure and perhaps some profit—

Hoping you will have leisure to write to me soon

I remain

very truly your friend

Geo Keats.

➤➤ 172 ‹‹

JOSEPH SEVERN TO R. M. MILNES

27 July 1842¹

Dear Milnes

Pray write to W^m Haslam yourself (Copthall Court Royal Exchange) he will like it better & come as you wish— I send the anecdotes² Yours very truly

Joseph Severn

Wed—July 27

²³ S suggests "the First Series of *Essays* which appeared in 1841, or *Nature* (1836), the Transcendental Bible."

¹ Severn was back in England when in March, 1841 (see II, 50), Brown wrote of his intention to give his Keats materials to Milnes, and Haslam died on March 28, 1851 (Sharp, pp. 193, 205). The only July 27 to fall on Wednesday during these years came in 1842.

² See II, 134, note 1.

» 172a «

JOHN JEFFREY TO WILLIAM L. BRECKINRIDGE ¹

8 March 1844

Address: Rev^d W^m L. Breckinridge/ Walnut Street.Walnut St. Friday Mor^e

Dear Sir

It gives me great pleasure to be of Service to you or any of your friends. Enclosed you have the signature of the Poet Keats, cut from a letter dated 1821 & written in the Isle ² of Wight. I would have sent you the entire letter, but in my posession are a great many of the letters & unpublished writings of John Keats which I consider too sacred to be dispersed un-

¹ On Jeffrey see No. 175. As soon as Breckinridge, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Louisville (see II, 107), received this note (Friday, March 8) he wrote on its blank page the address "Rev. Dr Sprague/ Albany/ New York," and a brief letter of his own, in which he said: "I am sorry that you deemed it necessary to offer any apology for your letter of the 27th ult— If you think of a Similar, or any other matter, in which I can Serve you, do not hesitate to command my services— . . .

"I have no acquaintance with any of the relations of the Poet Keats, resident here, except Mr Jeffry, now married to the widow of his Brother, the late Geo Keats, who is not living as you supposed— As Soon as I recieved your letter, I addressed a line to Mr Jeffrey who has just sent me the within, containing the enclosed scrap— I hope it will be Satisfactory to you—& I am happy in forwarding it with so little delay—"

William Buell Sprague (1795–1876), for forty years pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Albany, at his death owned what was called the largest and most valuable collection of autographs in America. ² *Written* Ilse. The misdated letter here referred to (Keats visited the Isle of Wight in April, 1817, and July-August, 1819) is apparently unknown.

necessarily as I have an idea of arranging them for publication
some of these days when I have little more leisure

Respectfully Yours

John Jeffrey

Rev^d W. L. Breckinridge

&c

&c

»» 173 ««

THOMAS WADE¹ TO R. M. MILNES

27 January 1845

Clarendon-road,
Jersey, Jan^y 27, 1845.

Dear Sir,

As you once thought me not unworthy of being a guest at your breakfast table, you will, perhaps, not deem me impertinent in thus writing to you.

I rejoice to see that you are about to give the world a worthy edition of Keats. In one of his Sonnets—"To a Friend who sent me some Roses"—is the line:

"But when, O, Wells! thy roses came to me"—

and, perhaps, in a note to it, you will feel a pleasure in doing justice to a man and a poem now totally neglected, and perhaps entirely forgotten, by the world. Wells is the author of a fine dramatic poem entitled "Joseph and his Brethren," published, I think, under the name of Howard,² and which you

¹ Playwright and poet (1805-1875), whose *Tasso and the Sisters* (1825) and *Helena* (1837) were influenced by *Isabella*.

² In *The Contention of Death and Love* (1837) Wade alludes to Charles J. Wells (see II, 118) and in a note praises his "great" and "noble" poem, *Joseph*, which had been published under the name of H. L. Howard. Writing to W. J. Linton in 1845 (Boston Bibliophile Society's *Twelfth Year Book* [1913], pp. 96f.), Wells remarks that "a Mr. Wade whom I do not know" in "a volume of his poems . . . has spoken of *Joseph* in *measureless* terms of praise . . . terms which show that either he is cracked or I am a devilish clever fellow and don't know it."

will find *shelved* in the British Museum. He was the friend of Hazlitt and Keats. Keats and he quarrelled about some trifle or other; the quarrel being ended by Wells' present of roses:

"Soft voices had they, which,³ with tender plea,
"Whisper'd of peace, and truth, and friendliness unquell'd."

Horne (R. H.)⁴ knew Keats and Wells both intimately, I believe; and he once read to me a noble MS. sonnet on Chaucer⁵ from the pen of one or the other of them—and, I think, from that of Keats. There are MSS. tragedies of Keats, too, in existence, are there not?

In this out of the way corner of the world, I am not likely soon to see your edition of Keats—but, Apollo and all the Muses and Graces prosper it, and make it a lasting monument to the glory of both the Poet and the Poet-Editor!

Yours, Dear Sir,

Very truly,

Thomas Wade

»» 174 ««

JOHN TAYLOR TO EDWARD MOXON⁶

13 February 1845

30 Upper Gower Street

Feby 13, 1845

Dear Sir,

I have seen an Announcement of an Edition of Keats's Poems as being in Preparation, with his Life by M^r Monckton Milnes, which is of course a Communication from you.—

³ Really that.

⁴ Author (1803–1884) of *Orion* (1843) and friend of the Brownings.

⁵ "This pleasant tale is like a little copse."

⁶ Versifier and publisher (1801–1858) of Wordsworth, Lamb, Tennyson, Browning, Milnes, and husband of Lamb's adopted daughter, Emma Isola. See H. G. Merriam's *Edward Moxon* (1939).

I should be sorry to be obliged to interfere, but if necessary I must take such Steps as the Law authorises for the Protection of my Copyright.

Your Object would perhaps be attained in a more satisfactory Manner, if I were to sell you the Right to an Improved Edition of Keats's works. I have a complete MS Collection of them made for a future Edition, which contains not only several which have not been published, but also some important Corrections of those which have.—besides Copies of many of Keats's most interesting Letters.—I have always desired that an Edition should be published worthy of the Author, illustrated with Plates from his Portraits, Bust, &c. in my Possession. These & the MS. Vols. shall be shewn you, if you will favor me with a Call.—

The Life of Keats cannot be written so satisfactorily, I think, by any one as by his most intimate Friend J. H. Reynolds.—I have spoken to him on the Subject, & he expresses a great Desire to undertake it. If this were done, M^r M. Milnes would have the freer Scope for any Remarks of his, which would probably concern chiefly the Genius & Writings of the Author—

Requesting to hear from you in the Course of a Week if you think favorably of this Suggestion, I am,

Dear Sir,

Very truly yours

John Taylor

Edward Moxon Esq^r

» 175 «

JOHN JEFFREY¹ TO R. M. MILNES

13 May 1845

Address: Richard Monckton Milnes Esq^r/ M. P./ London/ [In upper left corner] *Per first steamer to England/ (paid). Postmarks:* LOUISVILLE KY. MAY 14; PAID.

Louisville Kentucky U. S.

13th May 1845.

Richard Monckton Milnes Esq

&c &c

Sir

I have recently seen in the public newspapers, that you are about to publish a new & correct Life of John Keats, the poet; & such information afforded me much pleasure, as I am fully satisfied that such a task could not have been undertaken by a more appropriate person, yourself a poet & an Englishman. By my recent marriage with the widow of the late George Keats, who resided in this City; I have become possessed of papers & information relative to the poet Keats, without which, it is impossible in my opinion to give his complete life: they consist of private letters addressed to George & Thomas Keats, & other connections of the family, written by John Keats during his tour through Scotland & other places, & are quite voluminous & interesting, forming a sort of Journal well worthy of publication. Also of an unfinished tragedy of which four Acts are complete. Also of many sonnets & miscellaneous peices of poetry, heretofore unpublished as well as reminiscences & anecdotes of the poet as given by the late George Keats & wife. It is earnestly desired by the children of the late George Keats, who are now living here, that full justice, so long withheld, should be done

¹ See Nos. 172a, 177, and 178.

to the memory of their Uncle. & that the garbled life ² of him now before the public be corrected & made complete if possible. To which end I would inform you that copies of all papers &c in my possession, are at your service, & will be forwarded to you as soon as you make known to me, that you have a desire to make the proper use of them. By reference to M^r Charles Dilke, now or lately, Editor of the *Atheaneum*, you can assure yourself of the correctness of my statements, & the genuineness of my papers.

Yours Respectfully

John Jeffrey

»» 176 ««

THOMAS WADE TO R. M. MILNES

26 May 1845

Clarendon-road, St. Helier,
Jersey, May 26th/45.

Dear Sir,

Had I possessed any letters of Keats, you would have had an instant reply from me to your kind response to my plea for neglected Wells.¹ But I am not so fortunate: I never personally knew Keats. The only people I know likely to have communications from him are R. H. Horne ² and Wells himself—of the present whereabouts of neither of whom am I aware. I was disappointed to hear from you, that the paragraph which prompted my first request was an erroneous one.³ Still, I shall rejoice to hail the advent of your memoir and correspondence of “Adonais.”

² Hunt's (1828) and the Galignanis' (1829).

¹ See No. 173.

² See No. 173.

³ Milnes had told Wade that he was not editing Keats's *Poems*.

Do you think that the Steam-Engine, epically imagined, or the Steam-Engine and Railroad, *done* amœbæanly, would make a Keats-ian poem pay the wear-and-tear of the shoe-leather of a Printer's-demoniac in this enlightened age? I think it a question steamed about with doubt. "Locksley-hall," tho', tells well in the balloon way:

"Pilots of the purple twilight, *dropping down with*
COSTLY BALES."⁴

There's the charm!

Yours ever most sincerely,

Thomas Wade.

» 177 «

JOHN JEFFREY¹ TO R. M. MILNES

26 July 1845

Address: Richard Monckton Milnes Esq^r/ M P/ Care of Mr Moxon Publisher/ 44 Dover Street/ London/ [*Forwarded to*] 26 Pall Mall [*then to*] Fryston Hall/ Ferrybridge/ Yorkshire/ [*and thence to*] Stadeley Manor/ Newcastle Staffords/ [*In upper left corner*] Per first Steam Pacquet for England/ paid tot [?]. *Postmarks (part illegible):* LOUISVILLE KY. JUL 29; 27 AU 1845 LIVERPOOL SHIP; Pall-Mall; 28 AU 28 1845; VD 30 AU 30 1845; SE 1 1845.

Lou[i]sville Kentucky

26th July 1845

Dear Sir

I have your letter dated 28th June, & since its receipt have commenced copying some of the letters written by John Keats; to finish them all, will take some time as my profession leaves but few leisure hours, & I therefore subjoin a list of the manuscript verse in my posession, in so far as I believe it to be

⁴ Line 122.

¹ See Nos. 175, 178, 179.

unpublished. You can then inform me if a copy of any, & what part, of them you would desire to have; they are apparently the first rough copies & perhaps M^r Brown may have been furnished with copies of them too.

First. Otho—an unfinished tragedy, 4 Acts complete written in 1819.

Second. La belle Dame, sans *Merci*, in 12 verses of 4 lines each, beginning thus—

“Ah what can ail thee, wretched wight.”²

“Alone & palely loitering.”

Third. A scrap, descriptive of Staffa in 56 lines,³ copied in a letter to the poets brother Thomas, dated Duorcalen⁴ 7 July 1818, beginning thus—

“Not Aladin Magian”

“Ever such a work began”

Fourth. Meg Merrilies, a song in 30 lines copied in a letter to his brother Thomas, dated Aughtercairn 3 July 1818—beginning, thus—

“Old Meg she was a gipsy”

“And lived upon the Moors—”

Fifth. A Prophecy in 56 lines, copied in a letter to his brother George, dated February 1820 or 21⁵ beginning—“Tis the witching time of night”

“full is the Moon & bright”

“And the stars they glisten, glisten”

Sixth. An extempore, in 96 lines, copied in a letter to the poets brother George, dated 15th April 1820 or 21,⁶ beginning thus—

² The “wretched wight” version; Keats must have sent it to George later than his letter of February 14–May 3, 1819, which contains the “knight-at-arms” version (*Letters*, pp. 329-331).

³ Garrod, pp. 492-494, has 57 lines.

⁴ Keats wrote “Dun an cullen” for “Derrynaculen” (*Letters*, p. 197).

⁵ Garrod, p. 494, dates it about October 16, 1818. See II, 224f.

⁶ Garrod, p. 562, dates the letter 1819.

- “When they were come into the Fairy’s Court”
 “They sang, no one at home, all gone to sport”
- Seventh. Chorus of Fairies—102 lines, copied in a letter to the poets brother George, dated wednesday 1820 or 21,⁷ beginning thus
 “Salamander—Happy, happy, glowing fire”
 “Zephyr—Fragrant air, delicious light.”
- Eighth. Sonnet on Fame, in 14 lines, copied in a letter [to] the poets brother George dated 30th April 1820 or 21,⁸ beginning thus—
 “How fever’d is that man who cannot look”
 “Upon his mortal days with temperate blood”
- Ninth. Sonnet on Fame—in 14 lines, in same letter beginning thus—
 “Fame like a wayward girl, will still be coy”
 “to those who woo her with too slavish knees”
- Tenth. Sonnet to Sleep—in 14 lines, in same letter beginning thus—
 “O soft embalmer of the still midnight”
 “Shutting with careful fringes & benign”
- Eleventh. Poem. The Eve of St Mark, a fragment in 114 lines⁹ copied from a letter to the poets brother George, dated Monday 1821 beginning thus—
 “Upon a Sabbath day it fell”
 “thrice holy was the Sabbath bell”
- Twel[f]th. Sonnet on the Colour Blue—in 14 lines beginning thus—
 “Blue, ’tis the life of Heaven! the domain”
 “Of Cynthia! the wide palace of the Sun!”

⁷ Garrod, p. 443, dates the poem, which has 100 lines, 1819.

⁸ Garrod, p. 469, dates the letter April 30, 1819.

⁹ Garrod, pp. 449-453, has 119 lines. He dates the poem February 13-17, 1819.

Other peices there are, but of such a nature as to be better suppressed, & evidently not intended for publication; mixed up with the prose of the letters are many scraps, but so connected with the letters as to be necessarily left in their places—& these last I will copy as I copy the letters containing them.

As to the profits arising from the sale of the work you are about to publish in my opinion, they belong undoubtedly to yourself; but if relinquished by you, I should by all means claim them for the children of George Keats, who are legally the heirs of the Poet, being descendants of the oldest Brother & are in such circumstances as to render such a thing very acceptable. M^r G. Keats affairs previous to his death, were seriously involved, & after his death owing to the bankruptcy of his partner in business, his estate was put into Chancery for settlement, & the consequence was, it paid about twenty cents in the Dollar of his debts, thereby leaving his children seven in number totally unprovided for, except by the dower of the widow which is only allowed on landed or real estate, & amounts to a mere pittance. I presume you have been in correspondence with Keats sister Fanny, now M^{rs} Llanos, I have no doubt but that she could furnish you with some letters &c. which are valuable, as all the letters of John Keats are remarkable for their humor & I think would be eagerly read & sought after. Please to inform me at what time you expect your life of Keats to come from the Press—

& believe me

Yours truly & respectfully

John Jeffrey—

R. M. Milnes Esq^r

M. P—

» 178 «

JOHN JEFFREY TO R. M. MILNES

8 September 1845

Address (mutilated): Richard M{onckton Milnes}/ Care of { . . }/ (paid)/ Per first Packet for England/ [*Readdressed:*] R. B. Sheridan Esq/ Frampton/ Dorsetshire/ [*In another hand and ink*] Dorchester/ <Poole>./ *Postmarks:* LOUISVILLE KY. SEP 17; 26 OC 1845 LIVERPOOL SHIP; KA 27 OC 27 1845.

Louisville Kentucky U. S.

8th September 1845.

Dear Sir

Enclosed you have the correspondence of John Keats in so far as it is in my possession.¹ I am rather disappointed with it; but send it to you, to do with as you please. I have copied nearly all the letters for several reasons; in the first place I think you are the proper judge as to what ought, & what ought not to be published; in the second place I could scarcely comprehend the letter until I had copied it, as they were almost all miserably illegible & badly dated; in the third place I suppose there are many things mentioned in the letters which though unfit for publication may yet be of considerable service to you. The dates I presume from M^r Brown's papers you can readily adjust.

I intend copying nothing more until I hear from you as to whether you desire it or not. I am {wi}th much Respect

Yours, &c

John Jeffrey

R. M. Milnes Esq^r

&c &c

¹ All the transcripts Jeffrey made are in the Harvard collection.

» 179 «

GEORGIANA KEATS JEFFREY TO ALEXANDER JEFFREY ¹About 1845 ²

My dear Brother,

If you will allow me to call you so, but from what M^r Jeffrey says, I find you are much displeased with me, for sending a note to M^{rs} Barrow—which she overreached herself, when she showed it to you, and Clarence,³ endeavouring by that means, to have you consider her as injured innocence, if she had taken time to reflect she would have seen, I took every precaution to prevent her exposure— Your brother tells me if I were to visit Nashville, I should be shuned by every person there, and if I went into public I should be insulted. This I know is absurd. It was my intention to have let the matter rest, but as I find I have forfeited your good opinion which I value so highly, if you will have the patience to read, I will explain

¹ See I, ciii. W. H. Perrin, *History of Fayette County, Kentucky* (1882), p. 635, calls Jeffrey "a gentleman descended from a noble Scottish family, and possessed of a high order of scientific and literary taste." Though he was an engineer of some distinction, his name survives primarily because in 1863 he became the second husband of Rosa Griffith Vertner Johnson Jeffrey (1828–1894), poet and novelist. Their Lexington home, according to Lewis Collins' *History of Kentucky* (ed. R. H. Collins, I [1924], 589), "is as famed for its generous hospitality, as its mistress is 'eminent for beauty and poesy among even the women of Kentucky.'" There are monuments in the Lexington Cemetery for Mrs. Jeffrey, Alexander Jeffrey (born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1815, died in 1899), Alexander Jeffrey, Jr. (November 30, 1864–June 30, 1902), and Dunbar Griffith Jeffrey (1866–1892).

² The letter is placed here purely for convenience. Since Georgiana remarried on January 5, 1843, and since she speaks of a miscarriage, it was probably written before the end of that year or early in 1844.

³ Possibly Georgiana's son (1830–1861).

everything as it happened. On ⁴ M^r Jeffreys return from his first visit to Nashville, he was in extacies with the place and people, particularly M^{rs} Barrow— I told him I had often heard of her, and that her name was invariably coupled with some tale of scandal, this he said was impossible, as she was all that was *beautiful* and *pure*. During the time you were absent in Louisville to meet your brother on his return from his second trip to Nashville, I recieved a note with the following words— Madam, The enclosed will give you a clue to the detention of your husband, in Nashville, the enclosed was a note written on [a] card, it was from M^{rs} B—— to M^r J—— thanking him in the *warmest* most affectionate terms, for some present he had made her, and very evidently, wishing to get up a flirtation with him. I was vexed, but knowing he would be home soon I resolved to recieve him kindly and not mention the note to any person. I threw it in the fire, and considered that, was an end to the affair. I forgot, to say the note, was signed William Jarvis.

A few weeks after you left us several letters were brought, the man said, this is for you. I gave them all to M^r J—— observing one is for me, he handed the fatal letter back to me, which I read several times, when as John was engaged by his other letters I copied exactly, underlined as you see

There's not an hour or day or dreaming night <but>
 But I am with thee,
 There's not a wind but whispers of thy name,
 And not a flower that sleeps beneath the gentle moon
 But in its fragrance and its hues tells a tale of thee.

Angel World

I searched it through, and found a slight pencil mark
 forgive me, but all says thou lovest me and I—you

⁴ Probably a new paragraph was intended here.

Come to me at morning Come to me at noon
Come to me at any hour but let it love be soon.

If it is not too much trouble, I wish you to send me a bouquet stand, such as Gen B—— saw when in Cincinnati. I will pay you the money if you wish, or —— Write to me if it is but two words, I have much to tell which I dare not write—

When I gave your brother the letter, and he had read it, he was so much confused he could scarcely speak— You must not think me immodest if I tell you all my sufferings. I was so much shocked and distressed, and I confess angry, I went to my room and wrote the note which you saw, I went to bed that night, but not to sleep, I was in the greatest agony both of *mind* and body, and the next day lost all hopes of an heir to your brother — I was very ill for three weeks, and the constant agitation occasioned by Mr J—— going again to Nashville retards my recovery—and the doctor said he could not, “minister to a mind diseased.” ⁵ I do not know how he found it out, I write all this to you as I would to an own brother, I hope when you think of what I have done it will be without prejudice— You I fear as a *man* you will decide in favor of the *Mistress* rather than the wife, but indeed Dear Alick, I cannot afford to lose your friendship, as I have not one relative of my own, in the world, which makes me cling more closely to the brother of the man I feel I could risk my soul to save from pain— During Mr Jeffreys last absense I recieved a most indecent letter from Nashville, telling me in the coarsest terms of the *too* great intimacy, between him and that abominable woman. In one of her late *confidential* conversations with your brother, she told him I had sent her an anonymous letter concerning her amour with him— He knew it was not me altho’ she would not show him the letter. I

⁵ See I, 177.

have been too ill and too much out of spirits for such amusement, besides it is too painfully serious, for me to make a joke of. I ⁶ throw myself entirely on your mercy and honor, to keep this entirely to yourself—as John will never forgive my exposing his present fancy—I do not blame him so much, as he felt so *much flattered* by what *he thinks*, the *love* of so beautiful and stylish a woman as he describes her, I feel confident he is only her dupe, she *thinks*, he is a man of fortune, and it is her practice to get all she can from her paramours. John poor fellow lays all my information to poor M^{rs} Ernest who is innocent ⁷ of that ⁸ as she was in Louisville during the time of the reported *liaison*—between M^{rs} B—— and M^r E—— and happily she does not know anything about it—Do tell me if you think I have acted intemperately or wrong, I feel that I should do it again. If you think me wrong pray forgive.

Your Sister Georgiana Jeffrey

Your brother went to Cleaveland yesterday, only arriving here the day previous, it is strange he did not get the despatch which I requested M^r Caldwell to send, which he called on me to say he had sent, time enough for M^r J—— to be here on Monday morning,—when he came home, he said all he knew about it was from the Louisville papers, he must have been to some other place, or he could, not have missed it.

If you are not too much engaged, you will write to me by return of post I shall get it before he comes back I will not send any message to your family as I would not wish Aunt Ross to know anything about it, but I hope you are all well. With the best wishes for your happiness

I am—G A J—

⁶ Probably a new paragraph was intended here.

⁷ Or *perhaps* innocent.

⁸ Of that *is repeated*.

»» 180 ««

JOHN TAYLOR AND EDWARD MOXON: AGREEMENT¹

30 September 1845

Memorandum of Agreement made this
Thirtieth day of September 1845. Between John
Taylor of Upper Gower Street, Publisher, and Edward
Moxon of Dover Street, Publisher, as follows:—

M^r Taylor agrees in consideration of Fifty Pounds to be paid as hereinafter mentioned to assign to M^r Moxon an equal Right with himself to publish all and every the Poems composed by the late John Keats comprising "Endymion." "Lamia." "Isabella." "The Eve of St. Agnes." "Hyperion." and other Miscellaneous Poems and Poetical Compositions and also an equal Right with himself to publish all or any of the Manuscript Letters and copies of Letters written by the said John Keats and now in the custody or power of M^r Taylor.—

That the said sum of Fifty Pounds shall be paid by a Bill to be drawn for the same amount by M^r Moxon and payable to M^r Taylor or his order at Six Months after date.—

The expense of any Assignment beyond that made by this Memorandum of Agreement to be borne by M^r Moxon.

[Signed] Edward Moxon.

It is understood and agreed that M^r Moxon shall be at liberty to publish from time to time all and every or any of the before mentioned Poems Letters and copies of Letters in any form or forms he may think fit and either with or without a

¹ The paper has an embossed stamp with the words "TWO/ SHILLINGS/ SIX PENCE./" When the agreement was recorded on October 2 it was again stamped, "London/ O/ 2.10.45./" See No. 199.

Life or Memoir of the said John Keats or other Notes or Comments prefixed to the said Poems and Letters or any of them; and that M^r Moxon shall be entitled to the entire profits and proceeds of every Edition thereof to be published by him and that M^r Taylor shall be entitled to the entire profits and proceeds of every Edition of the said Poems and Letters which may be published by him.—

[Signed] Edw^d Moxon.

»» 181 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO R. M. MILNES

6 October 1845

Address: to/ Richard Moncton Milnes Esq^r M. P./ Fryston Ferrybridge/
Yorkshire/ [*In lower left corner*] J. Severn. *Postmarks:* D3 [?] OC—7
1845; FERRY BRIDGE OC 8 1845.

21 James St Buckingham Palace Oct 6

Dear Milnes

I am gratified in hearing from Moxon that you are occupied on Keats & so at once write you one or two important communications— You & I have always agreed <in every> about him when nearly all his other friends & admirers have been at variance, Keats's fame suffering meanwhile— I am glad it is left for you to make known to the Public the real cause of his death, which as far [as] I am <know> aware has never been made known— I mean the poor fellows anguish at the first symptoms <of death> of consumption when he was about to be married to a most lovely & accomplished girl, which anguish never ceased to the moment of his death.—the idle story of the critique having killed him it is now time to put in the back ground that we may show the real tragedy of his death.—As regards the critique I disbelieve it as he never once mentioned

<from> it during the time I was his inseperable companion in Italy & going there,—And on the contrary his death-stricken marriage was the corroding care which hurried him to the grave.—This Lady was a Miss Brawn, she was possessed ¹ of considerable property in addition to her beauty & youth & was devotedly attached to Keats & his fame.—She lived with her mother next door to Keats at Hampstead, I frequently saw her in my visits to Keats— She was rather taller than Keats & strongly resembling the splendid figure (in a white dress) in Titians picture of sacred & profane Love ²— I did not know at the time that the marriage was all well understood, but I remember one morning about the time Keats showing Brown & myself a single drop of blood which he had coughd up & which he declard was certain sign of death— We did not believe it, nor did any one, but his rapid change, tho' without consumptive symtoms was sufficient proof.—His love for this Lady was too elevated a feeling for him ever to talk about it, & when all hope of living was at an end in his own mind, it was still a more closely lock'd secret.—When we left England I certainly was not aware of Keats's being more than a common acquaintance with this Lady— My first knowledge of the seriousness & solemnness of his passion was about a month before his death, when amongst many letters to him, all of which he declined to open, was one which he requested me to place on his dead heart within his winding sheet,—this is all I should know if he had not left a seald letter to Brown written during our voyage ³ & indeed the only thing & last he ever wrote

¹ Apparently possessed.

² See II, 330. Severn mentions the resemblance three times during his correspondence in the late seventies with Forman (*John Keats: Letters of Joseph Severn to H. Buxton Forman* [1933], pp. 12, 14, 18). In the second mention he reproves Forman: "'Tis the Lady in White in Titian's picture . . . & not the 'nude' for shame!!"

³ On November 1, 1820. His last, also to Brown, was written at Rome on November 30. See *Letters*, pp. 523-527.

after leaving England, this I send you a copy of as it shows the cause of his death & is interesting as the last example of his writing. Now do take this as the serious wind up of his life—the critique make mention of in its place but only a[s] the poor fellows least misfortune—the drop of pectoral blood must have been just about a year before his death—I am not aware if it is mentioned in any of my letters which you have—As regards the close of Keats' life I am aware it is your intention to publish my letters intire, of course as they were written in such distress of mind any inaccuracy of language I should be glad to have corrected, all which I leave to your kind discretion.—

I hope you have made up your mind to publish the tragedy as I cannot but think that it is in every way worthy of Keats certainly it has some of his finest Poetry in it.—

Have you Sonnets beginning. "Blue 'tis the hue of heaven
also—

"It keeps eternal whisperings around

—and

"Times sea hath been 5
years at its slow ebb

"after dark vapours have
oppressd our plain,

& the ode—

"God of the golden bow

I have copies written by Woodhouse

(on Fingals cave)

& by Brown

"Not Aladdin Magian

also M.S.S letter of Keats's from the Highlands which is gay beyond measure, made up of droll poems (on the gad fly & another on the Bag pipe & the "Stranger" play) ⁴ if you would like it to look over I will send it you as it might convay some idea of the natural [?] complexion ⁵ of Keats mind in his earlier days, which certainly was of the most vivacious description—yet

⁴ *Letters*, pp. 184-190.

⁵ *Apparently* complexion.

extending from the gay to the grave in the most fascinating way— He was call'd up into grave manliness at the mention of any thing oppressive & seem'd like a tall man in a moment—but the general tenor of his manner was very pleasant, not only in his looks which always bore an animated smile, but as he had such a delightfull way of telling everything with imitations kindly & gently done without effort, then excellen{t} puns sliding in unawares—his voice was like O'Briens,⁶ <indeed the> whose reading always reminds me of Keats— There was never an effort about him to say fine things, & yet he said them most effectively—he was certainly a most fascinating creature, but more by the gentleness of his manners giving effect to his vavacity & seriousness than from ought else as to artifice or effort.—Should you extend your memoir of him to anything beyond the mere description of his character I could call up for you many things of a gay nature as to his conversations, indeed I have several in a book, mostly puns,—I recollect at this moment the origin of the Hyperion.—Keats was abusing Milton to me & a f^d whose name I forget,⁷ but who was rather stern— I had expressed my great admiration & delight in Milton, when this f^d turning to Keats said “Keats I think it great reproach to you that Severn should admire & appreceate Milton & you a poet should know nothing of him, for you confess never to have read him, therefore your dislike goes for nothing”—after this Keats took up Milton & became an ardent admirer and soon began the Hyperion.—I mention this to show that his

⁶ Stafford O'Brien, a university friend of Milnes's, president of the Cambridge Union, amateur actor, who later changed his surname to Stafford (Reid, I, 49, 84, 106, 381). With four other stage-struck Cambridge men O'Brien met Severn in Rome in March, 1834, and begged for the privilege of acting *Otho the Great* there. Writing about this to Brown, Severn said that O'Brien's "voice and manner of reading remind me most forcibly of Keats himself" (Sharp, p. 164).

⁷ Colvin, p. 262, says both Severn and Bailey "energetically" reproached him.

likings & dislikin[g]s were extraordinary.—One day he came to me full of the finest idea that poet ever had which he said Leigh Hunt was then writing— It was a comparison of Nature's effects striking on an elegant mind to Memnon's image music at the suns rays— I told him he would find it in Akenside (a Poet he so hated that he would not look in him) & I quoted the whole passage to his great surprise, tho he declared that Hunt would do it a great deal better & that he would not tell him of Akenside ⁸

He had an ample capacity for Painting & Music & applied them largely to his Poetry, I could point out many passages taken from the one & the other— Titians picture of Bacchus & Ariadne is the original of the scene in the *Endymion* ⁹— There is {a} beautifull air of Glucks which furnishd the groundwork of the coming of Apollo in Hyperion— Which portrait will you have? & can I assist you with illustrations of any kind?—

If you write me here I shall be able to answer promptly as I am afraid that I shall have no occassion to leave town—this Autumn for the first time I have no portrait to do in the country— You will have heard probably of my success as regards the Houses of Parliament & that I now am one of the selected six artists in the Hall of the Poets ¹⁰— Spencer I believe is mine Wishing you every success I remain yours very truly

Joseph Severn

Rc^d Monckton Milnes Esq^r M. P.

⁸ *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, I.109-124.

⁹ The connection between *Endymion*, IV.218-250, and Titian's picture in the National Gallery was stressed by Milnes, II, 68f., by Bailey (see II, 284), and by *Aldine*, p. xxix. De Sélincourt (*Poems of John Keats* [5th ed., 1926], pp. 410, 431, 446) also finds Titian's influence on "Sleep and Poetry," line 335, and *Endymion*, IV.193-250; but Colvin, p. 231, considers it doubtful and Lowell, I, 437, impossible.

¹⁰ See Sharp, p. 203. The guidebooks, like *The New Palace of Westminster* (1862), list no work of Severn's. The fresco from Spenser was (p. 46) painted by G. F. Watts.

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JOSEPH SEVERN: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON KEATS

October 1845 (?)¹

Brief extracts are quoted by Colvin, pp. 496, 511.

—When we had passed the bay of Biscay, where we <were> had been in danger & great fright from a storm of three days—Keats took up L^d Byrons Don Juan accidentally as one of the books he had brought from England & singular enough he opened on the description of the Storm, which is evidently taken from the Medusa frigate & which the taste of Byron tries to make a jest of—Keats threw down the book & exclaimed, “this gives me the most horrid idea of human nature, that a man like Byron should have exhausted all the pleasures of the world so compleatly that there was nothing left for him but to laugh & gloat over the most solemn & heart rending since² of human misery this storm of his is³ one of the most diabolical attempts ever made upon our sympathies, and I have no doubt it will fascenate thousands into extreem obduracy of heart—the tendency of Byrons poetry is based on a paltry originality, that of being new by making solemn things gay & gay things solemn⁴—On another occassion when we were in the dull Quarantine with the other passengers (who were two English

¹ Sent to Milnes perhaps soon after the preceding letter. The beginning and end are missing. Both Lowell, II, 482, and Colvin, p. 496, date these notes about 1845, but they may well be the anecdotes Severn mentions in his letter (No. 172) of July 27, 1842. Many of them can be found in Sharp (as on pp. 63, 67) from another of Severn's narratives.

² *Sic* (for scenes).

³ *Written* his.

⁴ Compare Milnes, II, 75f., and see II, 135. *Originality* is apparently written *originality*.

Ladies) the captain requested the sailors on deck to continue singing just to amuse us— I confess I did not understand or listen sufficiently to be aware of the kind of thing they were singing, but my surprise was great when on a sudden Keats rose with rather a frantic look & exclaimed that nothing could teach him the extent of mans depravity, that it must be part of a demon existance, that it would be difficult for these sailors in any way to rise up to the level of brutes beasts." I soon found that Keats had painfully understood they were sin[g]ing abominable songs when they knew the Ladies below in the cabin were listening—this he added is only another tho more sincere spec[i]men of the unmanly depravity which Byron so publicly assumes to feel or tries to make others feel—'tis all the same system of a cramped & wilfull nature the one by a preverted education—the other by no education at all

On our arrival in Rome we were sadly servd with dinners and as the price was great Keats determined to set it right.— Neither of us could speak Italian sufficiently to do it, but Keats told [me] he had found an effectual way of doing it without words— When the dinner came in the basket as usual, he went & opened it & finding [it] bad as usual, he opened the window & calm[ly] & collect[ed]ly emptyd out each dish into the Street & then pointed⁵ to the Porter to take the basket away— Keats was right, in a quarter the man returned with an excellent dinner nor did we ever have a bad one again.—We were not chargd for the condemned one

At Naples we went to the Theatre San Carlo & were both struck with the scenery, particularly with two sentinels admirably done & which Keats praised as the finest painting he ever saw— At the close of the first act, our amazement cannot be

⁵ The line indicates the end of a paragraph or section.

⁶ Or *perhaps* pointing.

described, nor Keats emotion when we discove[r]d that they were real Sentinel{s} but placed in the midst of scene ⁷ where no Englishman could expect or indure such a thing.—Our surprise over, Keats exclaimd—“We’ll go instantly to Rome, for as I know my end approaches, I could not die calmly, were I to kno{w} ⁸ that my bones were to remain amongst a people with such miserable politicks”—

The following morning we saw a review of the Neapolitan troops & I was struck with their fine appearance but Keats said—“Its all nothing, the’ve not ⁹ stamina, they’ll all run away.”—As this was at the moment when they had settld the Revolution of 20, it show’d great discrimination—

The Italian boatmen who came about us when we were performing Quarantine in the bay of Naples, used to laugh at our Cabin boy, who was a favorite of us all—on one occasion an Englishman M^r Cotterell who was very kind to us, was ask[ed] by Keats the reason, the boatmen said that the boy laughd like a beggar.—Keats indignantly said “tell him he laughs like a damn’d fool”— M^r Cotterell could not put this into Italian as they have nothing equivalent to our damn— At which discovery Keats exclaimed, “No, there ¹⁰ are not worth a damn”

When actually compared Keats & Shelley set off each other, Keats as a good & Shelly ¹¹ as a bad man.—and the events of their respective lives will prove it—as they were both cut off whilst young the comparison is interesting

In a game at Cards when travelling with C Brown &

⁷ *Sic.*

⁸ Doubtful reading. Milnes, II, 79, uses much of this material, but says, “He could not bear to go to the opera, on account of the sentinels who stood constantly on the stage, and whom he at first took for parts of the scenic effect.” Perhaps Milnes followed Severn’s later account (Sharp, p. 63).

⁹ *Sic.*

¹⁰ *Sic.*

¹¹ *Sic.*



BENJAMIN BAILEY



GEORGE FELTON MATHEW

others in the Highlands Keats observing that one of his f^d had dirty hands said "Now if Dirt were trumps what a glorious hand you'd have" ¹²

In the Bay of Biscay on our voyage out to Naples we were overtaken by a storm of three days & nights during 30 hours of which we never ate or drank or even slept.—During the night when in the darkness the water rushing up & down our Cabin filld me with horror I was anxious about Keats who was in a birth opposite me & who from his delicate state I was afraid might die under such a trial.—It was a long time before I could even speak the noise was so great, how ¹³ when I was able at last I said "Well Keats this is pretty Music is it not? when to my great surprise (for I really was afraid he might be dead) he answerd calmly & pleasantly "Yes, it is "Water parted from the Sea" ¹⁴

When in the highlands with C. Brown for many days they met ¹⁵ with nothing but wooden chairs, and on getting back to the City & sitting down on a Cushiond chair Keats exclaimd from Midsummers Nights dream "O bottom, bottom, thou art translated"

In an Argument on Astronomy with Shelley, Hunt, Robinson & others M^r Charles Clark was a little dogmatical in laying the Astronomic laws, when Keats in an undertone, away from C Clark said "Charles's wain"

Listning to a Lady singing "Adeste Fideles" ¹⁶ Keats

¹² Compare Sir John Bowring, *Autobiographical Reflections* (ed. L. B. Bowring, 1877), p. 61: "Hazlitt was a dirty fellow, and seldom washed his hands. When playing at whist with Lamb, the latter said to him in his stammering way, 'Haz-Haz-Haz-l-l-it! if dirt were trumps, what hands you'd hold.'"

¹³ *Sic*.

¹⁴ All this happened in the English Channel storm: see I, 153.

¹⁵ *Apparently written meet*.

¹⁶ See Dom John Stéphan, *The Adeste Fideles: A Study in Its Origin and Development* (1948).

spy'd a Violin under the Piano Forte & whispered to me "A dusty Fiddle is"

When watching Keats I used sometimes fall asleep & find we were in the dark—to remedy this one night I tried the experiment of fixing a thread from the bottom of <one> a lighted candle to the Wick of an unlighted one that the flame might be conducted, all which I did without telling Keats—<On his waking & finding> When he awoke & found the <flame nearly done> 1st candle nearly out he was reluctant to wake me & while doubting suddenly cried out, "Severn Severn heres a little fairy lampliter actually has lit up the other candel" my experiment had succeeded & given him great and agreeable surprise.—

On his death bed & in great emotion at his cruel destiny he told me that his greatest pleasure had been the watching the growth of flowers.—

His was a gigantic mind which would have required another 10 years to mature it.—he seemd a supernatural child in his emotions & speculations—but there was a strong bias of the beautiful side of humanity in every thing he did—his imagination was great & fervid but always in Reasons leading strings—he cared not to examine for nature did it for him, he could not correct a line it was not his temperament he lov'd things that grew out of imagination I remember once playing to him one of Haydns—which was wild in character, When he exclaimd—"He's like a child—there's no knowing what he will do next"

He intended to write a long Poem on the story of Sabrina as left by Milton & often spoke of it at Rome but never wrote a line

His fighting with the butcher ¹⁷

* * *

¹⁷ See II, 152, and Lowell, II, 607f.

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JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE¹ TO R. M. MILNES

31 October 1845

Boston, Mass. Oct 31st 1845.

Dear Sir—

While on a journey through the Western States this summer I heard that you were preparing a new edition of the works of John Keats. Recently, on my return to Boston, Mr Ticknor the publisher² informed me that there might perhaps be still time to communicate with you before your book goes to press. I therefore write in order to give you a copy of an autograph poem³ of John Keats' now in my possession, & hitherto unprinted in any edition of his works. If you have not seen it, I think you will be glad to have it. It was given to me some years since by the poet's brother George, who resided in Louisville Ky. where I also lived at that time. Geo. Keats was one of the noblest & best of men, he possessed a piercing intellect, a refined taste & pure intellectual culture. I account it the greatest happiness to have known him. He had none of his brother's fancy, & his intellect though very keen was not I think either so broad or so deep as that of John. But he had the same woman's sensibility joined with the same manly courage, for in my opinion John was thoroughly manly. George loved & relished the old

¹ See II, 35n. In the *Athenaeum*, January 4, 1873, p. 18, Clarke says: "Lord Houghton did not acknowledge my letter; but he made use of the information contained in it, which was the essential point." Clarke's letter is reproduced in facsimile in *Keats' Reputation*, between pp. 94, 95.

² William Davis Ticknor (1810-1864). Ticknor and Company announced in advertisements appended to Dix's *Pen and Ink Sketches* (1845) that "Keats's Poetical Works, with a life by R. M. Milnes" was in preparation.

³ This manuscript of the "Ode to Apollo" is now at Harvard.

poets, & had an appreciating love for his brother's poetry. He indeed revered him more than he usually expressed, & his memory & fame was very precious to him. It was always his favorite thought to return to England & procure the publication of his brother's complete poems under worthy auspices. I have heard him speak of Dilk, the editor I think of the Examiner, as one to whom he hoped to confide his brother's Mss. When I heard that you were to be the Editor I was happy in thinking how much such an arrangement would have pleased George. He died in 1841, a year after I left Kentucky, in the prime of manhood. He left a widow, since remarried to a Mr Jeffreys, & several children, two of whom, Georgiana & Emma, strongly resemble the portraits of John. George Keats had in his possession many unpublished poems of John, a part of a Drama, his letters, (which were excellent & give you quite a new view of his intellect) & his copy of Spenser and of Milton, containing many penmarks & marginal notes. His notes written on the fly leaves of Milton, I printed in the *Dial*,⁴ edited by R. W. Emerson, No. Two of his letters I also was allowed to print in the *Western Messenger*,⁵ some years ago. I trust you have been put in possession of all these papers by the family, but lest you should not have the lines to Apollo, I now transcribe them for you, just as they stand, with the erasures & corrections. I hope that you will see the remarks on Milton in the *Dial*, some copies of which periodical find their way to England. I will not apologize for my freedom in thus addressing you, & will venture further to add that you are yourself well known & your poems loved by many in this country.

Mr Geo. Keats had an excellent portrait of John, in

⁴ III, 495-504 (April, 1843). Milnes, I, 274-281, refers to the *Dial*, and from it prints Keats's annotations on *Paradise Lost*, as copied by George Keats. See II, 338n.

⁵ *Western Messenger*, Louisville, I, 763, 772-777, 820-823 (June, July, 1836).

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HAYDON TO MOXON

1845

water colors, well deserving to be engraved. It is a front face, looking up, with the chin resting on the hand. It was painted, I think, by Seaverns, John's companion in Italy.

With much respect

I am yours

James Freeman Clarke

R. M. Milnes, Esq—
London

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B. R. HAYDON TO EDWARD MOXON

28 November 1845

Printed in the *Athenaeum*, February 19, 1898, p. 248, with the incorrect date March 28 and other slight inaccuracies.¹

London Nov 28th

1845

British Museum

My dear Sir

I have enclosed a copy of the two superb sonnets, addressed to me, after Keats visited the Elgin Marbles for the first time with me & I think Reynolds—1817— With his leave I sent

¹ The letter was then owned by John Haines of Brighton. It was apparently written (see the next two letters) after a talk with Moxon. Haydon, Keats, and probably Reynolds saw the Elgin Marbles together on March 1 or March 2, 1817 (see Lowell, I, 275, 279f., and Finney, I, 184). An autograph copy of the two sonnets which Keats then wrote is preserved in the *Poems*, 1817, he inscribed for and gave to Reynolds on or before March 3. They were published simultaneously in the *Examiner* and the *Champion* of March 9, in the latter being appended to Reynolds' unsigned review of the *Poems*. For further details about the sonnets see Rollins in *Studies in Honor of A. H. R. Fairchild* (1946), pp. 163-166. In spite of Haydon's efforts they were not included in Moxon's 1847 edition of Keats, but Milnes, I, 26-28, printed them.

them to the Editor of *Annals of Fine Arts* 1819 but I think they were *first* published in the *Examiner* by Keats himself. 1817.

The ode to the Nightingale, & to a Grecian Urn were first published in the *Annals* as well—as he repeated both to me in the Kilburn meadows, in his recitative tone of melancholy voice just after he had composed them I begged a copy for the *Annals* as I wrote many things in the work—and there they appeared ² at my request before the[y] came out in a Volume.

As I esteem these sonnets after Wordsworth's first [?], the highest honor Poetry ever bestowed on any artist and they have been removed & suppressed, I must say I have great desire they should appear in the New Edition now about to be published of his Keats' works, by yourself.

You will find them in Volume 3rd *Annals of Fine Arts*—Pages 171. 172—British Museum—

I am dear Sir

B R Haydon

to Mr Moxon.

[He transcribes somewhat inaccurately the texts of the sonnets from James Elmes's *Annals*, and at the end writes:] Sent to B. R. Haydon March—1817 (by a letter ³ of thanks of that date a copy being in his possession)—

² July, 1819, January, 1820. *Aldine*, p. xxiv, uses the facts in this sentence.

³ Apparently Haydon meant his own letter to Keats of March 3 (*Letters*, p. 13).

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B. R. HAYDON TO EDWARD MOXON (?)

29 November 1845

Printed in part by Lowell,¹ I, 542f., and in full by Finney, I, 328.London Nov 29th 1845

Dear Sir

Of Course my letter accompanying the Sonnets was *private*—

As you alluded to Keats opinion of Wordsworth. If he (Keats) Complained he had a right—because Wordsworth did not behave to Keats when I introduced Keats to him as he ought—

I have a letter ² of Keats wherein he expresses the most glorious respect & love of Wordsworth, and expresses the highest turmoil of pleasure at my sending the first sonnet he addressed me to Wordsworth—

When Wordsworth came to Town, I brought Keats to him, by his Wordsworths desire— Keats expressed to me as we walked to Queen Anne St East where M^r Monkhouse ³ Lodged, the greatest, the purest, the most unalloyed pleasure at the prospect. Wordsworth received him kindly, & after a few minutes, Wordsworth asked him what he had been lately doing, I said he has just finished an exquisite ode to Pan—and as he had not a copy I begged Keats to repeat it—which he did in his usual half chant, (most touching) walking up & down the room—when

¹ She says it was written "to an unknown correspondent," but evidently it is a sequel to the preceding letter.

² See *Letters*, pp. 10-12.

³ Thomas Monkhouse, a relative of Wordsworth by marriage. See *Letters*, pp. 75, 308, 352, 493.

he had done I felt really, as if I had heard a young Apollo—Wordsworth drily said

“a Very pretty piece of Paganism—

This was unfeeling, & unworthy of his high Genius to a young Worshipper like Keats—& Keats felt it *deeply*—so that if Keats has said any thing severe about our Friend; it was because he was wounded—and though he dined with Wordsworth after at my table—he never forgave him.

It was nonsense of Wordsworth to take it as a bit of Paganism for the Time, the Poet ought to have been a Pagan for the time—and if Wordsworth’s puling⁴ Christian feelings⁵ were annoyed—it was rather ill-bred to hurt a youth, at such a moment when he actually trembled, like the String of a Lyre, when it has been touched.

I wish you would send this letter to M^r Milnes and say I have his last note⁶ to me before he left England, [*word illegible*] which I will send him for his Volume if he desire it—

I am dear Sir

B. R. Haydon

All Hunts assertions about it being said at my House is mistake—as well as half his other sayings about both Keats & Shelley—

⁴ So apparently.

⁵ So apparently.

⁶ Apparently Haydon means Keats’s last note of August (?), 1820 (*Letters*, p. 513).

⇒ 186 ⇐

B. R. HAYDON TO EDWARD MOXON¹

30 November 1845

Address: Private/—Moxon E.

London Nov 30
1845

My dear Sir

I send you some of Keats Correspondence which you will oblige me to forward to M^r Milnes.

If he do not think they will contribute to put Keats in a right footing, as to *common sense*—or that they will add interest to his Volume, beg him to return them to you—with my apology for the intrusion—

I beg Severn do not see them, unless published

I fear M^r Milnes may think it a liberty but at any time, (if he do not) I will appoint a time, & will lay before him the original letters—at my own Home.² Mrs Haydon is so poorly that I am under the necessity of deferring my intended pleasure of seeing you for the present. Yours ever

B. R. Haydon

P. S.

I do not wish to have the appearance of forcing myself on M^r Milnes' attention, or into his work—but I am most anxious to shew by the extracts, Keats was not the conceited person he was taken for, by being patronised by Leigh Hunt: and was as well aware of his *dilemma*, as the public.

Moxon E.³

¹ A sequel to the two preceding letters.

² Or *perhaps* House.

³ Intended for Esq.

» 187 «

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON KEATS ¹

16 March 1846

Extracts have been printed by Colvin, *passim*, and thence Lowell.

A few memoranda of the
early Life of John Keats.

Born on the 29th Oct^r 1796.²— His maternal grandfather (Jennings) was proprietor of the old Swan and hoop livery stables, on the pavement in Moorfields, nearly opposite to the entrance into Finsbury Circus. His father, I was told, had been ostler in the same establishment. I can remember that my own father always spoke of him with respect, on account of his excellent natural sense, and total freedom from vulgarity, and assumption, on account of his prosperous alliance with the family of his employer. I have a clear recollection of his lively, and energetic countenance, particularly when seated in his gig, and preparing to drive his wife home, after visiting his sons at school. In feature, stature, and manner John resembled the Father. George & Thomas were more like the mother, who was tall,³ had a large and oval face, with a somewhat saturnine manner. I remember my mother, when speaking of M^{rs} Keats, making the remark; that she had a strong and clear sense.—One of Keats's maternal uncles (Jennings)⁴ was in Duncan's Ship at the fight off Camperdown, and he behaved as Englishmen usually behave upon

¹ Enclosed in the letter next following.

² So Brown (see II, 54) and Hunt in *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (1828), p. 247.

³ See I, 303.

⁴ Lieutenant Midgley John Jennings, who died—shortly after his promotion to Captain—on October 8, 1808. See II, 164, and Lowell, I, 18f.

such occasions. He was so tall that he formed a butt for the officers in the enemy's ship to shoot at. The Dutch Admiral told Duncan⁵ the circumstance after the battle.—After this, to say that John Keats's family were "respectable," in the common acceptation of the term, would be an impertinence—they were, indeed, all of them that I remember, estimable.—John, and his two brothers, and his two uncles before him, were all educated at my father's school at Enfield; and they were all welcomed at his table after they had gone into the world. John was a favourite with him, both on account of his active talent, and industry; and not least, perhaps, for his terrier-like resoluteness of character, with a generous placability. Upon one occasion, <I remember>, he could not severely punish him, when he had entered into a personal contest with the usher, because the latter had boxed his younger brother's ears. He was then about 13 years old.—During the last 12 months of his residence at Enfield one feature of his character came forth in full strength; his resolution and constancy. He determined to carry off all the first prizes in literature; and I think he succeeded throughout: but he accomplished his end with the total sacrifice of all <his> the hours appointed for relaxation. Even on the half holidays, when his school-mates were out walking, or playing at cricket, he was translating either from Fenelon, or Virgil. He has been driven out of school to take exercise; and then he would walk in the garden with a book. He made no farther advance in Latin (while at School) than to the *Æneid*, and I think he translated upon paper the whole of the 12 books. The quantity he wrote of translation during the last 18 months or 2 years of his stay at Enfield was surprising. I do not remember that he even commenced learning the Greek language. His uncommon familiarity—almost consanguinity with the Greek mythology, I suspect

⁵ De Winter was defeated by Adam Duncan, Viscount Duncan (1731–1804), off Camperdown in 1797.

is to be⁶ traced to his reading Lemprière's Classical Dict⁷ Tooke's Pantheon,⁸ Spence's Polymetis⁹ abridged for schools; and latterly Chapman's Homer.—This last it was my happiness to introduce to him. A copy of the work had been lent to me; and he having come to pass <the> an evening with me, we read through the night. How distinctly is that earnest stare, and protrusion of the upper lip now present with me, as we came upon some piece of rough-hewn doric elevation in <that> the fine old poet. He sometimes shouted.—At that time, I believe, he was lodging in the Poultry, over the passage that leads to the Queen's arms tavern. When I came down to breakfast the next morning, the result of <the> his night's happiness was lying on my table: he had sent me the finest of all his Sonnetts—that "On reading Chapman's Homer." This was after he had come to London; having entered himself as a student of S^t Thomas's hospital. He left school at 14, and served a four-years apprenticeship to a medical gentleman in Church Street Edmonton of the name of Hammond. During this period of his life it was that his love of poetry first developed itself—at least, to me. He commonly walked over to Enfield once a week to borrow my books, and to talk about what he had read. He devoured rather than read: and at this time he translated and copied an immense quantity. So little idea at that time had I of his real love of poetry, that I imputed to a boyish ambition his asking the loan of the Faery Queen: but I soon found how that gorgeous world of ideality had called into being his own world of imagination. He ramped through the scenes of that, (not-of-this-earth)—that

⁶ Written the.

⁷ John Lempriere, *Bibliotheca Classica*, reached its ninth edition, London, 1815. See I, 256, note 36.

⁸ Andrew Tooke, *Pantheon*, 1722, "New Edition," London, 1809, reached its twenty-ninth edition in 1793.

⁹ Joseph Spence's book, abridged for schools, was in its sixth edition in 1802.

purely *poetical* romance, like a young horse turned into a Spring meadow.—What appeared most to delight him in Spenser (after the gorgeousness of the imagery) was the uncommon force and felicity of his epithets. This it was that first showed me his love of poetry; for I shall never forget the expression of pleasure and surprise in his face while speaking of that poet's power in conveying by one epithet the complete character of an image. One of the instances most strongly in my recollection is, where Spenser speaks of the "sea-shouldering whale."¹⁰—I think it was, unquestionably, the effect produced upon him by studying that finest of all models for fanciful, and descriptive scenery, that afterwards communicated such an impulse to his own genius in placing in the highest point of light, and in the most forcible language—position—regardless of every-day conventionalisms, whatever he felt, and desired to describe. So intense a pleasure did he derive from this exercise in descriptive refinement, that it was judged by those who were strange, and by those who chose to be strange to his habit of thinking, that he was fantastical: but Keats was neither an affected, nor an ostentatious mannerist; for a more honest-minded, and honest-hearted being never drew breath.—He entered himself of S^t Thomas's, but he could not knit his faculties to the study of anatomy. He attended the lectures; and he did not retain a word he had heard: all ran from him like water from a duck's back. His thoughts were far away—in the land of Faery. He was with "the lovely Una in a leafy nook"; or with "old Archimago leaning o'er his book."¹¹ He said to me that a ray of sun-light came across the lecture-room, and he peopled it with the "gay beings of the element," glancing to and fro like the angels in Jacob's dream.¹²—It was while he lived in the Poultry, and in the course of the year 1817,

¹⁰ *Faery Queen*, II.xii.23.

¹¹ "To Charles Cowden Clarke," lines 36f.

¹² *Genesis* 28:12.

that he produced his first little volume of poems; a remarkable cluster of gems for a youth under 20; for all the pieces in the collection, except the last, (that on "Sleep and Poetry") were written during his non-age; and the Sonnett on Chapman's Homer is among them.—As a proof of his facility in composition, he was surrounded by several of his friends when the last proof-sheet of his little book was brought in; and he was requested to send the dedication, if he intended one. He went to a side-table, and in a few minutes, while all <were> had been talking, he returned and read the Dedicatory Sonnett—"Glory and loveliness have passed away." The subject of this Sonnett may have lain in the bud of his mind, and had blossomed at his then bidding; but that which he wrote upon Chaucer's poem of the "Flower and the Leaf" is an unequivocal instance of his spontaneous and unpremeditated ease. He read it for the first time while I lay asleep upon his sofa, overcome by a long walk on a hot day. The book had fallen from my hand, and when I awoke I found written at the end of the poem that lovely testimony to its merit which would have delighted the old Patriarch himself. "This pleasant tale is like a little copse."—In the month of April 1818 Keats produced his "Endymion"; a poem comprising more than four thousand lines written within twelve months. At this time he resided in Well walk Hampstead. One of the most accurate pieces of self-appreciation is, I think, put forth in the preface to that work; wherein with so gentle a deprecation he says: "The imagination of a boy is healthy; and the mature imagination of a man is healthy: but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition *thick-sighted*:—thence proceeds mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters, which those men I speak of must necessarily taste in going over these ¹³ pages." It is neither my purpose, nor my inclination at

¹³ Really the following.

this time—nor would it be at any time to canvas the inequalities in that poem, the author of which himself so modestly anticipated; the reviewers did that with swift and fierce feet: its glowing beauties remain alone with me; and I have often thought of that Sunday afternoon, when he read to M^r Severn and myself the description of the “Bower of Adonis”; and the conscious pleasure with which he looked up when he came to the passage that tells the ascent of the car of Venus.—The procession of Cybele; the address to the moon in the 3^d Book; the portrait of old Glaucus; the magnificent triumph of Bacchus;—all these pictures present themselves <to me> when I think of the poem: and I presume that no one whose lips have been touched with a live coal from the Delphic altar, can read without an elevation of mind the Hymn to Pan. The author of the famous Sonnett, “The world is too much with us,” (no rash applauder of his contemporaries) to whom Keats repeated the hymn, pronounced it to be “a very pretty piece of paganism.”—What Theocritus might have said of it, were no difficult speculation.—After the production of the *Endymion*, Keats removed to another quarter of Hampstead, and occupied a cottage conjointly with the late M^r Cha^a Brown. It was here, I believe, that he attended his youngest brother Thomas (who was attacked by consumption) with a constancy and tenderness rivalling the assiduity of woman. The severity of this “labour of love”¹⁴ it may be presumed prematured the seeds of the same disorder that were latent in his own constitution. I believe his mother had also died of it.—The last time I saw Keats was during his residence with M^r Brown:—I spent the day with him; and he read to me the poem he had last finished—“The Eve of S^t Agnes.”—Shortly after this I removed many miles from London, and was spared the sorrow of beholding the progress of the disease that was to take him from us. When I last saw him he was in fine

¹⁴ *Thessalonians* 1:3. See II, 172n., 201.

health and spirits; and he told me that he had, not long before our meeting, had an encounter with a fellow who was tormenting a kitten, or puppy, and who was big enough to have eaten him: that they fought for nearly an hour; and that his opponent was led home. He used to be pointed out, as "the little fellow who licked the butcher-boy." ¹⁵—It is a great mistake; and no friend to the memory of Keats would give currency to the report, that his death was attributable to the attacks of the reviewers. The reviewers did not kill him; for his last work was his best. They hurt his heart, it is true; and a man must indeed be obtuse who could be indifferent to the wanton and unprovoked insult with which he was assailed. But he perfectly understood the animus of the organized system of that age. His reception now would be very different. The hoofs of anti-jacobin critics are "shod with felt." ¹⁶—With a bland and sweet nature, and with an intense love of the pleasurable in repose; nevertheless a sense of injustice would rouse Keats to a pitch of vehemence as picturesque as some of us have witnessed in the finest early representations of the great Kean, the actor, whom in face and stature he somewhat resembled. The portrait of Wouvermans by Rembrandt,¹⁷ in the Dulwich gallery, is a sorrowful likeness of him; but the one made by his friend, M^r Severn, is absolutely perfect, both in feature, manner, and expression.—I

¹⁵ See I, 325, II, 138.

¹⁶ *King Lear*, IV.vi.188f.

¹⁷ The portrait, queried as that of Philip Wouwerman (1619–1668) and attributed to Rembrandt, is listed in M. F. Sweetser's *Rembrandt* (1878), p. 154, but in modern catalogs of the Dulwich College Picture Gallery (1880, No. 282; 1905, 1926, No. 221) is called merely "Portrait of a Young Man" and said to be of the School of Rembrandt. Hazlitt praised the picture highly. Vincent Novello, Clarke's father-in-law, wrote to Leigh Hunt about 1823 (L. A. Brewer, *My Leigh Hunt Library* [1938], p. 123): "I was particularly struck with [the] portrait of Wouvermans [in the Dulwich Gallery], which is so extraordinary a likeness of Keats, that if his name had been inserted in the catalogue, no one could have doubted it had been painted for him instead of the Flemish artist."

never heard a schoolfellow, or a friend in after life speak lukewarmly of him: whatever may be the feeling of respect for his memory with posterity, (and I confidently anticipate a felicitous result) it will be cherished by all his early friends; for all loved him.=

⇒ 188 ⇐

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE ¹ TO R. M. MILNES

17 March 1846

Address: Monkton Milnes Esq^{re}/ M. P./ &c &c &c.

9 Craven Hill Bayswater Mar 17/46

Dear Sir,

I requested M^r Severn to assure you that I did not answer your application to me respecting my recollections of Keats, because I was so absorbed by the pressure of daily occupation, that I could not bring my mind to send you such an excuse, with such a motive presented to me for breaking it.—I am now about to leave town for nearly three months; and rather than you should be wholly disappointed of any answer to your complimentary letter, I last evening sketched (really in haste) the accompanying memoranda. If they prove serviceable to you in the work you have happily undertaken, and in which I am deeply interested, I shall be delighted.

I request you will not withhold any application in which you may fancy I can assist you.—

I am

Dear Sir,

Your faithful

and obedient Servant,

Charles Cowden Clarke.

Monkton Milnes Esq^{re} M. P.

&c &c &c

¹ Sent with the memoranda preceding (No. 187).

» 189 «

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE TO R. M. MILNES

17 March 1846

Address: Monkton Milnes Esq^{re}/ M. P./ &c &c &c.

9 Craven Hill Bayswater Mar: 17/46

Dear Sir,

I send you a few remnants, in case you should not have them among your collection.—The first sonnett—indeed, I believe the first attempt at staid composition¹ that Keats made, was the Sonnett upon M^r Leigh Hunt's quitting prison. He gave it to me as I was seeing him on his way home to Edmonton. The second, I think, he sent to the Examiner, either in the year 1815 or 16. I have forgotten the title—but I seem to remember an expression about "Nature's observatory"—speaking of a hill-summit.²—Two I possessed, in the original rough-draught, and which he gave to me as he wrote them off. Some worthless character has stolen them from me; and I can hear of no one who has copies of them.³ One begins somewhat in this way.—"Hurl'd from his throne, to dwell with owls and bats, Nebuchadnezzar had an ugly dream." &c⁴ The other he wrote one Sunday morning as I stood by his side. The first line ran thus. "The church bells toll a melancholy chime."⁵ I question whether you

¹ Actually his first poem was the "Imitation of Spenser." See the chronological list in Lowell, II, 531, and Finney, I, xi.

² "O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell" was printed in the *Examiner*, May 5, 1816.

³ Clarke's sister, Mrs. Towers (see II, 206, 464f.), had copied both poems in her manuscript volume of Keats's poems.

⁴ The rough autograph draft of "Nebuchadnezzar's Dream" in the Huntington Library is inscribed, "given me by C. C. Clarke M. M. H." (Garrod, p. 531).

⁵ The first autograph draft of "Written in Disgust of Vulgar Superstition" is in the Harvard Library. See I, 3, 274.

would have any hesitation about keeping them in M.S. nevertheless, I wish they were in my possession again. M^r Leigh Hunt ought to give you Keats's and Shelley's Sonnetts "*On the Nile*"—I know he has them.⁶ All three wrote, by agreement upon that subject.—I sent copies of three for you, to M^r Severn. You probably have them. "The Human Seasons"—and on "Ailsa rock," from the "Literary pocket book";⁷ and that on the episode of "Paolo and Francesca," from the Indicator.⁸—

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful,

and obedient Servant,

C Cowden Clarke.

Monkton Milnes Esq^r M. P.—

&c

&c

&c

»» 190 ««

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE TO R. M. MILNES

26 March 1846

Stratford on Avon

Mar: 26/46

Dear Sir

A friend at Manchester has sent me the enclosed. You probably know them; but I have thought right not to presume upon that. In about a fortnight I shall be in M^chester, when I am promised the account of the latter days of *George Keats*. This I will take care to forward to you.

⁶ See II, 352, 354f.

⁷ Edited by Hunt but not accessible to me. See Garrod, pp. 534, 490.

⁸ "A Dream, After Reading Dante's Episode of Paolo and Francesca" ("As Hermes once") appeared in the issue for June 28, 1820, p. 304.

I was vexed at being obliged to decline M^r Moxon's invitation to meet you; but I had been confined the whole week to my room, and only left it to journey to this place.

I am

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

C Cowden Clarke.

Monkton Milnes Esq^r M. P.

&c &c &c

I much regret to find that Humphrys¹ is not engaged to engrave the portrait of Keats. His *line* engraving I think superb.

»» 191 ««

LEIGH HUNT TO R. M. MILNES

7 May 1846 (?)²

Kensington— May 7th

My dear Sir,

I am not sure whether I ever spoke to you of the enclosed sonnet³ of Keats's, or whether you have a copy of it; but not wishing to lose the glory it gives me, I send it in case you have not.

Ever most sincerely yours,

Leigh Hunt.

R. M. Milnes Esq^r

&c &c

¹ William Humphrys (1794–1865).

² The date 1846 is a guess.

³ "On 'The Story of Rimini,'" which appeared in Milnes, II, 292.

→ 192 ←

MRS. B. W. PROCTER¹ TO R. M. MILNES

14 May 1846

Quoted in part and with characteristic inaccuracy by Milnes, I, 103f.²

May 14th 1846.

My dear M^r Milnes

You wish me to tell you what I remember of Keats. I never saw him but twice, but the countenance lives in my mind as one of singular beauty and brightness— It had an expression as if he had been looking upon some glorious sight—

¹ Anne Skepper Procter (1799–1888), wife of "Barry Cornwall." See I, cxvii f.

² Milnes says only that it was written by "a lady, whose feminine acuteness of perception is only equalled by the vigour of her understanding." Accordingly, he described Keats's eyes as blue, his hair auburn, to the discomfiture of the men who had known the poet. Severn, for example (see also No. 272 and R. W. Gilder in the *Century Magazine*, XXVII [1884], 603), affirmed that the eyes "had no tinge of blue, but were a warm gray—almost brown. Thus occurred a sort of Glaukopis-Athene dispute that Lord Houghton and Severn carried on in private letters, Lord Houghton to the last maintaining his description unmodified" (Eric Robertson, *University Magazine*, I [1880], 38). C. C. Clarke (*Recollections of Writers* [1878], pp. 153f.) tells readers to alter Milnes so that the eyes become "light hazel," the hair "lightish brown and wavy." But Houghton made no change in his 1867 edition, which was dedicated to Mrs. Procter.

Colvin, pp. 466f., misquotes part of the third sentence of the letter after saying that Mrs. Procter met Keats "only once, at a lecture of Hazlitt's." He describes Keats's eyes as "hazel-brown," but says that at the age of eighty-eight Mrs. Procter still believed their color blue. Lowell, I, 95f., misquoting Colvin's sentence, says the eyes were "dark brown," the hair a "golden red," which more or less agrees with Georgiana Keats's description (J. G. Speed, *The Letters of John Keats* [1883], p. xiii): "His eyes were dark brown, almost black, large, soft, and expressive, and his hair was a golden red." See also Coventry Patmore, *Bryan Waller Procter* (Boston, 1877), p. 201.

His Eyes were large [&] blue, and his hair Auburn, he wore it divided down the centre of his head and it fell in rich masses on each side his face, his mouth was full and less intellectual than the rest of the face— At this time, it was in 1818 ³ Hazlitt was lecturing at the Surrey Institution he was in perfect health and life offering all things that were precious to him. The only picture that I think like is one painted by Hilton ⁴ and in the possession of the Woodhouse family— The other pictures that I have seen have been done since his illness and have entirely lost the bright expression that I saw—

From M^r Leigh Hunt and from M^r J. H. Reynolds, the latter one of his oldest and best friends you will receive a more accurate account. The shape of his face had not the squareness of a mans, but more like some womens faces I have seen (particularly one in the Looking Glass) it was so wide over the forehead and so small at the chin.—

Yours always very gratefully

A. B. Procter

»» 193 ««

B. R. HAYDON TO R. M. MILNES ⁵

28 May 1846

London May 28

1846

M^r Haydon's Compts to M^r Milnes, & he has cut out the

³ Apparently 1818 changed from 1815. (The lectures began on January 13 and ended early in March, 1818.)

⁴ See Williamson, p. 102. The portrait was reproduced in the 1841 edition of Keats's *Poetical Works*. Severn's impression of it was far different from Mrs. Procter's: see II, 98, 329.

⁵ Endorsed by Milnes: "Haydon had put an end to his own life before my book was ready." In his biography Milnes, I, 36-41, prints the letter referred to, saying that Haydon sent it to him on May 14, 1846.

letter from his own memoirs—for him & only begs him to return it when done with.

M^r Haydon begs to express his great pleasure in becoming known to M^r Milnes, whose poetry he has so much admired—he only fears he talked too much about himself.

M. Milnes Esq M P

»» 194 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO R. M. MILNES

13 July 1846 (?) ¹

21 James St Buckingham Pal
July 13

Dear Milnes

I have just got Haslams answer—"That Tom & George Keats were clerkes at Mess^{rs} Abbeys (their Guardians) Merchants."—he brought many letters of mine (from Rome) describing Keats' last days but I conclude that you have copies of them, they were addressed to him & were always sent to Brown. He was most anxious that no passage relative to poor Keats's despair about Religion should be published,² but this I think so much better left to your discretion that I merely mention it at his request— I confess I am anxious about the letters of mine that you thought should appear—pray correct any striking error as you will perceive they were written under painful circumstances & always spontaneously

¹ A guess. The letter was presumably written before No. 223.

² Clarke likewise reproached Severn for mentioning in the *Atlantic Monthly* (1863) Keats's unbelief, "a circumstance totally unknown to any person beyond his own circle: for there is no trace of such a fact before the public from his own writings" (Sharp, p. 257), a statement that needs slight qualifications. See II, 291-295, for Bailey's comments.

It has occurred to me that most of the anecdotes I have written down you have in the said letters

Haslam desires me to say that he will visit you on any day to communicate any thing you may want of him—he was very intimate with Keats on his leaving school & going to study at St Thomas's³ Hospital & can tell you everything about that period—he can get you (he thinks) the register of the births of all three brothers if you want it Yours very truly

Joseph Severn

M. Milnes Esq^r

Ask Lord Galway⁴ if by chance he has a ticket to spare for the opening of Parliament & if he could oblige me as I want to paint the Queen, (not her portrait)

»» 195 ««

C. W. DILKE TO R. M. MILNES

3 September 1846 (?)

Lower Grosvenor Place

3 Sept^r

My dear Sir

I have been greatly annoyed that I could not fulfil my promise earlier—but when my son married, some five or six years since,¹ I removed my library and I have never yet found time to arrange letters & papers, which, with me, are calculated by the bushel.

I believe however that I now send all that I have pre-

³ Apparently Thomass.

⁴ George Edward Arundell, tenth Viscount Galway (1805–1876), Milnes's brother-in-law.

¹ In 1840.

served of any value—& more indeed than have value. When I lived at Hampstead Keats was at my house generally half a dozen times a week, so that few letters passed. I have added a few of Georges which throw a light on character. These I would not have entrusted to any one who had not got rid of poor Browns prejudices—for George in his admissions to a friend & his desire to state the whole truth, does not do justice to his own case, as I could prove. I have numberless others from George but relating to the private affairs of the family & the *Settlement* with his Sister, whose Trustee I am.

I add one or two MSS. They have all been published—but the variations, if any, may interest—one in the Lines on the Mermaid Tavern I think altered for the worse— 'O generous food,' ² has less colour than 'old generous food' which helps to realise [?] the picture.

The 'Lines on Visiting Burns' Country' were published by Brown in the New Monthly ³—part of an Account of a visit to the Highlands, to which you had better refer, as it *may* contain other Poems— Keats also wrote occasionally I think in the Indicator—and I remember one paper 'La Belle Dame Sans Mercy.' ⁴

I wish, with all my heart, that I could have sent any thing of value,—any thing proportioned to my love for the man and care for his fame—but it is too late for regrets.

I am Dear Sir

Yours truly

C W Dilke

The small parcel shall be forwarded this day by Railway.

² Line 9 (Garrod, p. 269).

³ Only part was published there in 1822 (IV, 252), but all was given in the *Examiner*, July 14, 1822. See II, 106.

⁴ *Indicator*, May 10, 1820.

» 196 «

J. H. REYNOLDS TO EDWARD MOXON

27 November 1846

Printed by Marsh, p. 37.

88 Guilford ¹ Street
Russell Square
27 Nov 1846

D^r Sir

I have, for the first time, heard from my friend M^r Taylor, this morning—that he has submitted Letters written by Keats to myself (in the confidence of easy correspondence between us)—to M^r M. Milnes for publication. I feel that *I* ought to have been consulted on the subject—and M^r Taylor agrees with me on this point. <An> I must therefore request you ² will not use any of my letters until you satisfy me that they ought to be made public, & with my consent.

I am D^r Sir

Your ob^t Ser^t

J. H Reynolds

—Moxon Esq

» 197 «

R. M. MILNES TO EDWARD MOXON

30 November 1846 (?)

Dear Mr— Moxon—

Let them wait—& do you be picking up for me all the information you can. How does the law stand about publishing

¹ *Apparently written* Guidford. Reynolds (see Nos. 204 and 207) was uncertain how to spell it.

² *Marsh* that you.

the letters <of> to Reynolds who is alive, unless he consents? but I am rather in favour of extracting passages from letters rather than publishing them entire.

yrs very truly,

Rich M Milnes.

Nov. 30th 1

» 198 «

EDWARD HOLMES¹ TO R. M. MILNES

9 December 1846

Part quoted, non-literally, by Colvin, pp. 11f., 14f., and from him by Lowell, I, 19, 22, 35, 37f., 40.

26 Gloucester Street

Queen Square Dec 9. 1846

Dear Sir

I regret that an accumulation of business has prevented my hitherto discharging my promise to you—which nevertheless has never been absent from my mind.

My recollections of the early life of Keats enable me only to correct certain impressions in Mr. Clarke's narrative;² which is in the main excellent. But there is an interval between Keats's first appearance at the school & the <development> dawning of his literary & poetical powers—(in developing which Mr. Clark has suppressed all the credit that fairly belongs to him)—this interval remains to be filled up.

Keats was not in childhood attached to books. His *penchant* was for fighting. He would fight any one—morning, noon

¹ This date actually is unreadable, and could be nearly anything. The letter would fit better after November 27 (No. 196).

² Holmes (1797–1859) was the author of *The Life of Mozart* (1845) and of many musical criticisms.

³ See No. 187.

or night; his brothers among the rest. It was meat & drink to him.³ Jennings⁴ their sailor relation was always in the thoughts of the <boys> brothers & they determined to keep up the family reputation for courage; George <by a> in a passive manner, John & Tom more fiercely. The favorites of John were few;—after they were known to fight readily he seemed to prefer them for a sort of grotesque and buffoon humour. I recollect at this moment his delight at the extraordinary gesticulations and pranks of⁵ a boy named Wade who was celebrated for this.

Up to the time in which M^r Clarke has observed his extraordinary application to school studies in which he carried off with ease all the prizes he was noted for his indifference to lessons. How he managed to get through the routine of the school I know not. He was a boy whom any one from his extraordinary vivacity & personal beauty might easily have fancied would become great—but rather in some military capacity than in literature. You will remark that this taste came out rather suddenly & unexpectedly. Some books of his I remember reading are Robinson Crusoe and something about Montezuma & the Incas of Peru.⁶ He must have read Shakspeare as he thought that 'no one w^d dare to read Macbeth alone in a house at two oclock in the morning.' This seems to me a boyish trait of the poet. His sensibility was as remarkable as his indifference

³ Kenyon West, *Century Magazine*, October, 1895 (L, 905), quotes an unnamed man of about 86 who once sold newspapers to Keats, and who saw him fight "for an hour or so" and beat "a cruel, mean-souled man who was teasing a little boy. . . he'd fight any one morning, noon, and night; it was meat and drink to him." The newspaper vendor must have known Holmes!

⁴ See II, 146.

⁵ Written of of.

⁶ *Aldine*, p. xiii, refers (see I, 259, note 64) to Jean François Marmontel's *Les Incas, ou la destruction de l'empire du Pérou*, 2 vols., Paris, 1777. Lowell, I, 40, thinks that William Robertson's *History of America*, London, 1777 ("New Ed.," 1817), may also have been read by young Keats.

to be thought well of by the master as a 'good boy,' and to his tasks in general. When his mother died—which was suddenly—he gave way to such impassioned & prolonged grief—(hiding himself in a nook under the master's desk) as awakened the liveliest pity & sympathy in all who saw him. He was in every thing the creature of passion—and when you compare this account with the lineaments of his face by Severn & with M^r Clarkes narrative—no material will be wanting for a true portraiture of his early life. The point to be chiefly insisted on is that he was *not* Literary—*his love of books & poetry manifested itself chiefly about a year before he left school*. In all active exercises—he excelled. The generosity & daring of his character—with the extreme beauty & animation of his face made I remember an impression on me—& being some years his junior I was obliged to woo his friendship—in which I succeeded but not till I had fought several battles. This violence & vehemence—this pugnacity and generosity of disposition—in passions of tears or outrageous fits of laughter always in extremes will help to paint Keats in his boyhood. Associated as they were with an extraordinary beauty of person & expression—these qualities captivated the boys, and no one was ever more popular.

I was too young myself to observe many particular traits beyond those I have mentioned; but these memoranda of childhood will I have no doubt cohere with the after life of the poet.

With many good wishes to the [. . .][†] believe me

dear Sir

faithfully yours

E. Holmes

Richard Monckton Milnes Esq^r

[†] Word illegible, possibly "cause."

» 199 «

J. H. REYNOLDS TO EDWARD MOXON

15 December 1846

Printed by Marsh, pp. 37f.

88 Guildford Street

15 Dec^r 1846

Dear Sir

I have been unable to reply to your letter, until the present time.¹

You state, & of course correctly, that in September 1845 you purchased of M^r Taylor <a Conjoint> "an equal right with himself to publish all or any of the Manuscript Letters and Copies of Letters written by Keats and now in the custody or power of M^r Taylor."—The Copies of <my> the letters addressed by Keats to me, & of the Poems contained in them—were unauthorizedly made by a M^r Woodhouse, to whom I lent them in confidence for perusal only.² These Copies came upon the death of M^r Woodhouse into the hands of M^r Taylor;—but you will be aware that He has no power to sell, nor you to purchase, them <right to us> for publication without my privity & consent.

I beg therefore to state (and you will take this as notice) that I object to the use or publication of the letters written by Keats to myself <as> or of the several poems inserted in or accompanying them.

I have it in intention to write my own recollections of

¹ This letter, like No. 204, is written on black-edged paper, since Jane Reynolds Hood had recently died.

² Woodhouse's various transcripts are described at length by Finney, II, 745-762.

Keats,—and I think it will not be considered unreasonable—that I should avail myself of what I possess & so deeply value.

I am Dear Sir

Yours truly

J. H Reynolds

Edw^d Moxon Esq

»» 200 ««

EDWARD MOXON TO R. M. MILNES

19 December 1846

London.

Dec^r 19th 1846.

Dear M^r Milnes,

I am glad to hear that you are at work on the Memoir of Keats. You will I hope when you come to Town bring the MS. with you ready for press. I enclose you Keats's 1st volume, which I have borrowed of Ollier.¹ I also enclose you two notes ² which I sometime ago received from John Hamilton Reynolds. I would suggest that you write to him. As he was Keats's most intimate friend he is perhaps offended that no application has been made to him. Believe me, dear M^r Milnes, ever faithfully yours

Edw^d Moxon.

R. M. Milnes, Esq

&c &c

¹ Charles and James Ollier published Keats's 1817 *Poems*.

² Nos. 196 and 199. Mr. James Pope-Hennessy has sent me a copy of a letter that Milnes wrote to Moxon from Bawtry on December 20:

Dear Moxon,

You ought to see Mr Taylor at once about Mr Reynolds' letters: they contain everything of value in the volume you gave me & for which I understood you had given Mr Taylor a valuable consideration. They are by far the best letters in the whole collection I have &, if you don't make some arrangement with Mr Reynolds, the thing will be very incomplete.

I am

Yrs truly

R. M. Milnes.

»» 201 ««

EDWARD HOLMES¹ TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

19 December 1846²

26 Gloucester S^t
Saturday.

My dear Charley

I think M^r Milnes had better apply to M^r Fred. Leffler³ of Apothecaries Hall for particulars of Felton Mathew. He is the only person I ever heard mention him. He was I know cognisant of the intercourse of Keats & Mathew.

Severns friend Haslam⁴ w^d I sh^d think know somewhat of the whereabouts of George & Tom during the time John was with Hammond.

Ever yours
Edw^d Holmes

»» 202 ««

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE TO R. M. MILNES

20 December 1846

Craven Hill Cottage, Bayswater.
Dec^r 20/46.

My dear Sir,

I have the most fatal memory with regard to dates. It always was so with me. I used annually to incur my mother's

¹ See II, 163.

² The Saturday on which Holmes wrote was no doubt December 19. His letter was enclosed in No. 205, which is dated December 26, a Saturday.

³ See II, 179.

⁴ The *m*, as in *Tom* just below, looks like an *n*. Below the name another hand has written *Haslam*.



JOSEPH SEVERN



BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

displeasure because I forgot the precise date of my father's birth. Your letter therefore has put me to my wits' trumps, and I can only guess at the precise points of time you require in Keats's life. For instance; I know that he was born in 1796;¹ and that at 14 he went to Hammond's the summer of 1810. He was bound to be with him 5 years. In 1817 however, (by the date of the first edition) his little maiden book of poems was published; and I know that he then lived, and had lived for some time in the Poultry; for I was present when he wrote the Dedication to Leigh Hunt, and Ollier took it away with him that night. By these dates therefore, it should seem that Hammond had released him from his apprenticeship before his time; and I have some vague recollection that such was the case, for they did not agree; Keats's tastes being totally opposed to his master's.²

I must have lent him the Faery Queen in 1811 or 1812. I feel sure that it was the first book of poetry he had of me; and he certainly had not been long at Hammond's before he came over to me.

It was very shortly after the publication of the first Vol. (1817) that he went to Well-walk, Hampstead; for Severn and myself were with him one Sunday when he read to us what he had just written in the Endymion—the Bower of Adonis. Severn can confirm this. From Well walk he went to that part of the Heath (I forget its name) where Brown and M^r Dilk lived,—in adjoining houses—Keats with Brown. M^r Dilk could supply you with this date.

Upon recurring to the dates of his apprenticeship, Keats must have fulfilled his engagement with Hammond; for I certainly associated with him in London for a twelvemonth before

¹ See II, 146.

² Keats was apprenticed to Hammond at the end of the midsummer term, 1811, and he broke his indentures four years later, probably in September, to move to 8 Dean Street, Southwark (Lowell, I, 47, 71-74).

the bringing out his Vol: in 1817. His Sonnett on the Flower & the Leaf—which he wrote in my Chaucer, while I lay asleep on his Sofa, in the Poultry, is dated Feb. 1817.

After all, my dear Sir, my assistance, I fear, will prove to be most limping; but it is the best I can do.

I am looking forward with no common interest to the publication of your biography—the more sure of my satisfaction being complete, from the graciously flattering tone of your approbation of my contributory mite.—

Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

and obliged,

C Cowden Clarke

R. Monckton Milnes Esq^r

M.P.

&c &c &c

»» 203 ««

LEIGH HUNT TO R. M. MILNES

22 December 1846

Kensington—Dec. 22.

My dear Sir,

We are not quite, but we are almost sure,—(M^r Hunt & myself) that the year in which Keats wrote the letter ¹ you speak of, was 1817. I have no others of his. He & I were so much together during the whole time of our intimacy, that I hardly received above three or four letters from him in all.

¹ Milnes, I, 42-44, prints the letter from Hunt's *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (1828), pp. 269-272, where it is dated only May 10. It is postmarked May 11, 1817: see *Letters*, pp. 22-27.

You may judge of the state of my health when I tell you, that I have not stirred out of the house since the hard weather set in, owing to a bad chest & a return of the worst part of my cough,—the result of coming back to this comparatively low & wet place from the “high & dry” air of Wimbledon. I sometimes think that my life would not be found worth another year’s purchase;—but I fight with this notion after my usual hopeful fashion; & feel still, as if a half year’s delivery from the necessity of stooping over my desk would open my chest again & give me a new chance. But this, I fear, the Whigs won’t have heartiness enough to give me; so I must endeavour to supply their want of it with a double portion of my own; as I did when I fought their Reform battles, when they had given up the cause.

Ever, dear Sir, most truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

P. S. I have no doubt that your book will be *full* of interest.—*Mem.* Do not tell the Whigs however that I have but poor hopes of the pension; ² else they will say, “Oh, he doesn’t expect it himself,” & so make a shabby conclusion that no harm’s done.—Excuse this overflow of my scrawl.—³ It is repeated illnesses which make me overtaken by my wants; otherwise I should do well enough, & would see hopes of pensions at the devil.

² Lord John Russell granted him a pension of £200 annually on June 22, 1847.

³ The “overflow” is written between the lines of the first page, the rest of the note at the top of the fourth.

» 204 «

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

22 December 1846

Printed by Marsh (M), pp. 38f.

R. Monckton Milnes Esq

88 Guilford Street
22 Dec^r 1846

Sir

I will shortly state my reasons for acting as I have done.¹ On the 29th of March last I called on M^r Taylor, & spoke to him on the subject of writing my "Recollections of Keats"—and of supporting them by his letters & poems. He leant to the intention. D^r Darling (the mutual friend of M^r Taylor & myself) saw me, & stated that <he> M^r Taylor only apprehended I should require too great a remuneration—when I actually used your words—that it would be "a labour of love,"² with me—& that money would not raise a difficulty. I <hear> then for the first time saw a bound MS. Book—with all my letters & Poems copied by M^r Woodhouse:—and expressed my annoyance. I recently called on M^r Taylor, & in the course of conversation, for the first time learned that he had sold all my copies to M^r Moxon for £50—!—I was never consulted on the subject,—never considered;—and he had no more right to receive a farthing—than he had to abuse a violated confidence. I protested to him—& received a plausible & offensive letter stating that he had seen M^r Moxon who had promised him that none of my letters should be printed—& "that my name should not be mentioned in the Memoir!" M^r Moxon assured me he had said nothing to *this*

¹ See Moxon's letter of December 19 (No. 200).² See II, 151n. Milnes describes his work thus in the dedication (I, vi) to Lord Jeffrey.

effect. I was sure of this,—& gathered the malice out of the nettle bed.³ It would be playing Hamlet, without Laertes!—I may merely add, that I lent all my papers to M^r Woodhouse *for his perusal*—& his perusal only;—for he was a good & enthusiastic friend of Keats. *He* meant nothing cringing towards money. M^r Taylor has asked me to drop the subject—& to pay me over a part of his wretched gain. If I *do* receive anything—it shall be handed to *you*—for the use of the family of George Keats.

And now, Sir, I want little “reconsideration of my decision.” All the papers I possess—all the information I can render—whatever I can do to aid your kind & judiciously intended work—are at your service!

But a word or two on the great subject of our correspondence. He was hunted in his youth,—before he had strength to escape his ban-dogs! ⁴ He had the greatest power of poetry in him, of any one since Shakespere!—He was the sincerest Friend,—the most loveable associate,—the deepest Listener to the griefs & disappointments of all around him,—“that ever lived in the ⁵ tide of times.” ⁶ Your expressed intentions as to the Life are so clear & good;—that I seem to have the weight of an undone work taken from me.

Perhaps when you come to Town I may see you;—but all my papers, I *distinctly say*, are at your service

I am Sir your faithf^l Serv^t—

J. H Reynolds

P. S.

I beg to thank you for your straightforward letter;—It was all that was required to satisfy my mind as to the surrender of my letters to any one, for the world’s use. Your own honest

³ Compare *I Henry IV*, II.iii.10, “Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety.”

⁴ *M* bandages.

⁵ *Apparently* them.

⁶ *Julius Caesar*, III.i.257.

love of literature (for I have since the receipt of your letter reassured my feeling by a reperusal of your three Volumes) will lead you to forgive me the fair, though troublesome zeal I have shewn towards Keats.

→ 205 ←

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE TO R. M. MILNES

26 December 1846

Craven Hill Cottage Bayswater
Dec^r 26/46

Dear Sir

Holmes being the only man whom I knew that could answer your queries about G. & T. Keats, and Felton Mathew, I sent him your note; and have to-day received the enclosed ¹ in reply. In any way that I can assist you pray do not hesitate to command me.

Yours, Dear Sir,

very faithfully

C Cowden Clarke.

R. Monckton Milnes Esq^r

M. P. &c &c &c

→ 206 ←

C. W. DILKE TO R. M. MILNES

28 December 1846

A few phrases are printed by Adami, p. 142, and five sentences by Rollins, *PMLA*, LIX (1944), 210.

L^r Grosvenor Place
28 Dec^r

Dear M^r Milnes

*I intended on receipt of yr letter to have hunted out &
¹No. 201.*

over the old accounts & sent you dates & sums—but this requires more time than I can just now spare, & therefore I write at once & rely on memory.

M^r Brown's estimate, I suspect, was founded on what M^{rs} Llanos received—and he came to the conclusion that each & all were entitled to the same amount. Not so. The truth, I believe was that the brothers were entitled to about £1500 each, or something less—& M^{rs} Llanos to £1500 and two or three hundreds more, a special bequest from, I think, the grandmother. Tom died under age, and thus added a third more, less Tom's debts &c. John got an advance *on this reversion* from the guardian, Abbey, but could not enforce a division before his Sister attained the age of 21—and *before* she was 21 John died. Thus it was that the property ultimately divided between George & M^{rs} Llanos was considerably & unexpectedly increased. Yet, on recollection, I doubt whether George received altogether more than £2300 or £2400.

There were two guardians or Executors. Both got into difficulties. One ¹ was obliged to fly to Holland & there died. This enabled the other, Abbey, to sell out the whole of the funded property.

M^r Valentine Llanos, the gentleman Miss Keats married, is a Spaniard, & came to this country for *his education*. He wrote 'Sandoval,' & another novel of which I have forgotten the name (Don Esteban) ²—both fiercely political & hence it has always been assumed that he was one of the expatriated. It is possible that the revolution prevented his return, & compelled him to get a living by teaching languages—but he was certainly in this country before the Revolution & received the information relating to it, which is to be found in his novels, from others.—At

¹ John Nowland Sandell, merchant, of Broad Street Buildings. See Adami, p. 30.

² Inserted later.

the death of Ferdinand ³ he returned with the rest of his countrymen to Spain—became Secretary to Mendizabel ⁴ when minister, & eventually consul at Gibralter—which he lost when Espartero ⁵ fled & the Provisional government was formed in 1843—Borrow, in his 'Spain,' ⁶ mentions an interview with the minister & speaks of 'the fine intellectual head' of *the Secretary*, a judgement in which I do not agree. While in office he contrived to *buy* some church property, & in this way or someway, has become a reasonably prosperous gentleman. I infer so far, curiously enough, I have this day received a letter from him, wherein he request[s] me to receive & pay the dividends due to M^r Llanos from June 1842! Now a man must be reasonably well off who leaves dividends unclaimed for four years & a half.

Is it not strange that in his letter dated 6th *ins'* he inquires what news from *George* & his family? I presume there can be no doubt that *George* is dead.

Excuse the haste with which this is written—and be assured that, whether hurried or not, I shall always find time to answer any questions or help to solve any difficulties.

No doubt you have heard from M^r Reynolds ere this. M^r Reynolds called on me ten days since on this subject—and left quite satisfied & content to give you the free use of letters & papers—

I am Dear Sir

Yours truly

CWDilke

³ Ferdinand VII.

⁴ See II, 33n.

⁵ Baldomero Espartero (1792–1879), Duke of Vitoria, Prince of Vergara.

⁶ In *The Bible in Spain* (1843), chapter XII, Borrow refers to Mendizabel's "secretary, a fine intellectual looking man, who, as I was subsequently informed, had acquired a name both in English and Spanish literature."

» 207 «

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

30 December 1846

Printed by Marsh, pp. 39f.

88 Guildford Street

Dec^r 30th

My Dear Sir

I shall have great pleasure in seeing you when you come to Town.

I know nothing of interest in the Hammond¹ days of Keats. The latter never referred to them, except to express his regret that he had undergone "a one of them."

My intimacy with Keats commenced I believe at the close of 1816 or early in 1817. I met him at Leigh Hunt's Cottage in the Vale of Health.² He then lived in the Poultry and I could, I am sure (but this I will test by the time I see you) point out the very House.

I find I have a bundle of papers—being orders & decrees &c in a Chancery Suit— They refer to the property left by M^{rs} Jenning[s], the Grandmother—but except shewing the date of the death of M^{rs} Rawlings (the Mother of Keats) Feb^r 1810³—and the month & year of the birth of the Poet Oct 1795 I see nothing to be of use to you. However you shall see them. He became of age about the time I first saw him. And he could hardly <hardly> have fulfilled his allotted time with Hammond. Rice knew Keats through me—(as did Dilke & C. Brown)—and was a *very* kind friend of mine. He was in the Law—drew

¹ See II, 148.

² See the notes to No. 2.

³ She was buried on March 20 (Pope, *TLS*, December 22, 1932, p. 977).

me into that dreary profession—and ultimately took me into partnership. He was a quiet true wit—extremely well read—had great taste & a sound judgment. For every quality that marks the sensible Companion—the valuable Friend—the Gentleman and the Man— I have known no one to surpass him.

M^r Hessey was the Partner of M^r Taylor—& attended to the retail business in Fleet Street. A very respectable person—but of no moment in the memoirs.⁴

You shall see the M.S of *Endymion*— I had little to do in revising. I can explain to you the Teignmouth letters⁵— Keats wrote a strange and rash preface—and I prevailed on him to cancel it—& place the inscription the book now bears. I have a proof of the cancelled preface⁶ somewhere,—but it has escaped into some place I have not yet discovered.

I have answered all your queries to the best of my power. I do not know whether a letter addressed to you with my personal recollections from our first acquaintance, to his leaving England—will be of use—but when I see you & know what you possess— We shall see.

I am Dear Sir

Yours faithf^l

J. H Reynolds

R. Monckton Milnes Esq

M. P

⁴ The present collection proves that he *was* of moment.

⁵ See Milnes, I, 120-130, and *Letters*, pp. 130-145.

⁶ See II, 234n.

» 208 «

FREDERICK LEFFLER¹ TO R. M. MILNES

6 January 1847

Apothecaries Hall
Jan^r. 6. 1847

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter containing some enquiries touching the acquaintance between the late John Keats & M^r Felton Mathew, to whom, one of his earlier poetical epistles is addressed;—also as to, what has become of the latter

In reply I beg to acquaint you, that my intercourse with M^r Mathew, has for more than 20. years entirely ceased; and I am consequently ignorant of everything concerning him since that time.

However, through a brother of M^r Mathew I have been enabled to obtain for you his present address, which I now have the pleasure to send you as under, &c

remain,

Yours obed^t

Frederick Leffler

address,

M^r Geo. Felton Mathew

4. Prince's Square

Kennington

¹ Leffler had once been an intimate friend of Mathew (see II, 180), who wrote him a poem beginning (Blunden, *English*, I [1936], 48),

"Generous Companion of my hours of joy!

Leffler! the flower of friendship long hath bloom'd

Between us.

→ 209 ←

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES

12 January 1847

Address: paid./ R. Monchton Milnes Esq./ Bawtry,/ Yorkshire. *Postmarks:* Kennington 1 D PAID; PAID 12 JA 12 1847; BAWTRY JA 13 1847.

4 Princes Square,
Kennington, 12th Jan^r 1846.¹

Sir.

In reply to your Letter of the 10 th. inst. I desire to inform you that I shall be very happy to send you any information I possess or may be able to obtain respecting John Keats—but being at present an invalid, it will not be in my power to devote my attention to the subject for a few weeks. My intimacy with him was not of long duration, as I was soon called by circumstances into a very different sphere of action. It will always

¹ An error for 1847, as the postmarks show. See No. 212. G. F. Mathew, born March 22, 1795, was the son of Richard Mathew, a mercer, who lived in Regent's Park. (The American bibliophile A. Edward Newton was his great-great-nephew.) He tells more than enough about himself in letters that follow. In the *European Magazine*, October, 1816 (LXX, 365), he published verses on Keats which J. M. Murry (*Studies in Keats* [1930], pp. 1-6) thinks were written after Keats's sonnet on "Solitude" and the two poems to Mathew's cousins Caroline and Ann (see II, 190n.), and to which Keats replied in his "Epistle to George Felton Mathew" (November, 1815). Murry also thinks (pp. 6-11) that Mathew's review (*European Magazine*, May, 1817 [LXXI, 434-437]) of the *Poems* (1817) is insufferable, that it expresses resentment because Keats had deserted him for Leigh Hunt, and that his association with Keats "practically ceased by the end of 1815" (but Keats *did* give him an autographed copy of the *Poems*). Blunden, *Votive Tablets* (1931), p. 253, likewise calls it "the embittered work of one who has a sense of the superiority of his friend, and of some personal injury"; but in his article on "Keats's Friend Mathew," *English*, I (1936), 46-55, he reverses this opinion and calls (p. 53) the review "greatly to Mathew's credit."

be a great pleasure to me, however, to remember that I at any time contributed to the happiness of his short life by introducing him to my father's family, and exercising towards him hospitable attentions. His Epistle to me beginning "Sweet are the pleasures that to verse belong" has many beauties; and I always thought the quotation from his favorite Spencer ² "*and make a sunshine in a shady place*" as singularly felicitous in its adaptation. I beg to assure you that if my health will permit me to be of any service to you in carrying out the wishes of his friends and relatives I shall be most happy.

I am, Sir,

Your obed^t Sv^t

G F Mathew.

P. S. Do you happen to know whether George Keats is living, and in what part of the world he is located?—his affection for his brother John was really more remarkable than even his brother's poetic genius. I believe he married and settled in America. This would be a pure source from which to obtain a narrative of his early life.

→→ 210 ←←

LEIGH HUNT TO R. M. MILNES

21 January 1847 (?) ³

Kensington—Jan. 21.

My dear Sir,

I hope you have concluded all this while (that is to say,

² *Faery Queen*, l.iii.4; "Epistle," line 75. When Thackeray in 1856 (*Letters*, ed. G. N. Ray, III [1946], 575) told how Americans wear "dingy shirts (many of them with grand diamond brooches making a sunshine in those shady places)" he was probably quoting Keats.

³ Presumably 1847, for C. C. Clarke on March 17, 1846 (see II, 155), referred Milnes to Hunt as the man who could supply the sonnets on the Nile.

whenever you thought about the matter) that I only delayed writing, in the hope of being able to send you some of the further information you wished. I did so; but am sorry to say, that nothing has come of it. I expected that M^{rs} Hunt would have furnished some; and at first she was sanguine about it, and indeed was the main cause of my delay; but she cannot persuade herself that what she has to say would be of any importance. I regret this; for I can supply nothing more from new quarters.

I enclose the two sonnets you desire. You are not aware that the one which Shelley contributed, is the same with that entitled "Ozymandias" in his works. Probably you have it; but in case not, it comes with the other.⁴—

I have just been delighted with seeing your good deeds to the poor, in a Lincolnshire paper. God bless you, and prosper all your undertakings.

Your obliged & faithful friend,

Leigh Hunt

R. M. Milnes Esq^r

&c &c

⁴ In February, 1818, each of the three poets wrote in competition a sonnet on the Nile; Keats's was "Son of the old moon-mountains African," Shelley's "Month after month the gather'd rains descend," and Hunt's "It flows through old hush'd Ægypt and its sands." With this letter Hunt enclosed his own sonnet and Shelley's "Ozymandias," and Milnes, I, 99-101, printed the three. Only in 1876 (see No. 291), did he learn that "Ozymandias" was not Shelley's Nile sonnet. See also Colvin, p. 256, and Lowell, I, 569-573.

➤ 211 ◀

THOMAS BURBIDGE¹ TO R. M. MILNES

30 January 1847

Triest. Jan^r 30.
1847.

Sir,

I chance to hear that you are about to publish a Life, with Remains, of Keats.

England and America know so little of each other that I cannot feel justified in abstaining from offering you the possibly superfluous information that there is a brother of the Poet living in the latter country. Whether M^r George Keats of Louisville possesses any considerable body of unpublished Letters or Poems, I do not know, but I possess myself a copy of some pretty & fanciful verses by John Keats addressed to his American Brother's Child which have never been published.²

Should it so happen that you are not in communication with this M^r George Keats & wish to be so, you are fully at liberty to address, making use of my name, M^r Howard Payne, the Amⁿ Dramatist, who gave me this information & I believe is personally acquainted with M^r George Keats. M^r Howard Payne is, I believe, at Paris at present preparing some Sketches of

¹ Burbidge (1816-1892) published *Poems* (1838) and *Hours and Days* (1851), and edited Lessing's *Laocoon* (1853). He collaborated with Clough in *Ambarvalia. Poems* (1849). Thomas Powell, *The Living Authors of England* (1849), pp. 86-94, in discussing the two writers calls them "the last twin stars that have made their appearance." For further correspondence resulting from this letter see Nos. 217, 229, 230.

² "'Tis the witching hour of night" had been published by Payne in the New York *Ladies' Companion*, August, 1837 (VII, 185-187), and thence in the London *Ladies' Pocket Magazine*, 1838, pp. 226-232. See II, 225n.

Africa for the Press, & if so is to be addressed at the Amer. Embassy— Should he not be in Paris, *New York* is his residence.

I trust you will not grudge the trouble of reading this note, even should its contents be useless to you. I might, I believe, find some common friend of yours & my own, through whom to send it, but not happening to be writing to any such at this moment, I will beg you, should you have any farther occasion to refer to me, to address me (Rev^d T. B.) under cover to "A. H. Clough Esq^r Oriol. Oxf."

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient Serv^t

T. Burbidge.

»» 212 ««

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES

3 February 1847

4 Princes Square,

Kennington, 3rd February, 1847.

Dear Sir.

I have to apologise for not answering your last note earlier. I was not at school with Keats. He was introduced to me by my cousins who are now residing in Bath; and to them I have written for any information they can give me respecting him. Not having yet received an answer to my letter I presume they are from home. As soon as I hear from them ¹ I will write to you again.

In the meantime I send you a few remeniscences of Keats. I always considered him a young man of promise, like a tree covered with a profusion of blossom— He was rather below the middle stature, but made up of fair proportions; with regular

¹ See No. 209.

and good features, and a complexion rather light but not florid. A painter or a sculptor might have taken him for a study after the Greek masters, and have given him "a station like the herald Mercury, new lighted on some heavenkissing hill."² His eye was more critical than tender, and so was his mind. He admired more the external decorations than felt the deep emotions of the Muse. He delighted in leading you through the mazes of elaborate description, but was less conscious of the sublime and the pathetic. He used to spend many evenings in reading to me, but I never observed the tears in his eyes nor the broken voice which are indicative of extreme sensibility. These indeed were not the parts of poetry which he took pleasure in pointing out. Nevertheless he was of a kind and affectionate disposition, and though his feelings might not be so painful to himself, they would perhaps be more useful to others.

Keats and I, though about the same age, and both inclined to literature, were in many respects as different as two individuals could be. He enjoyed good health—a fine flow of animal spirits—was fond of company—could amuse himself admirably with the frivolities of life—and had great confidence in himself. I, on the other hand was languid and melancholy—fond of repose—thoughtful beyond my years—and diffident to the last degree. But I always delighted in administering to the happiness of others: and being one of a large family, it pleased me much to see him and his brother George enjoy themselves so much at our little domestic concerts and dances.

Differing in our constitutional peculiarities and in our literary predilections, we were not less at variance on the gravest subjects of human interest. He was not one who thought it better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others which we know not of.³ He was of the sceptical and republican school. An ad-

² *Hamlet*, III.iv.58f.

³ *The same*, III.i.81f.

vocate for the innovations which were making progress in his time. A faultfinder with everything established. I, on the contrary, hated controversy and dispute—dreaded discord and disorder—loved the institutions of my country—believed them founded in nature and truth—best calculated to uphold religion and morality—harmonising on the one hand with the Theocracy of heaven, and on the other with the paternal rule at home. But I respected Keats' opinions, because they were sincere—refrained from subjects on which we differed, and only asked him to concede with me the imperfection of human knowledge, and the fallibility of human judgment: while he, on his part, would often express regret on finding that he had given pain or annoyance by opposing with ridicule or asperity the opinions of others. At this time Keats was on intimate terms with Leigh Hunt, from whom I should think much interesting information may be obtained concerning him.

When Keats wrote his Epistle ⁴ to me, beginning "Sweet are the pleasures that to verse belong,"—he was walking the hospitals; to which he alludes when he says "far different cares beckon me sternly from soft Lydian airs." Finding me of a serious and tender nature, ever ready with some caution to repress the ardour of his temperament, he speaks on the subject of poetry in the way I most frequently entertained it: invoking me to lend my aid, to find a place

Where we may soft humanity put on,
And sit and rhyme, and think of ⁵ Chatterton. x x
And mourn the fearful dearth of human kindness
"To those who strive,⁶ with the bright golden wing
"Of Genius, to flap away each sting
"Thrown by the pitiless world."

⁴ Mathew's verbal variants from the text in *Poems* (1817) are given in footnotes following.

⁵ on.

⁶ strove.

and it is pleasing to recollect that while I had opportunity, I aided him to the utmost of my power. His concluding lines are a dream he had of me, in which the objects appeared to him illuminated with the colours of the rainbow, though to me they may all prove cold and stern realities. Nothing can be more correct than what he says of the Muse, that

“For thee, she will thy every dwelling grace,

“And make a sunshine in a shady place.” ⁷

For I can truly say that the thoughts kindled by her inspirations have been the only sunshine of my life:—

“My constant friends,

“Who when harsh fate her dull brow bends,

“Uncloud me with a smiling ray,

“And in the depth of midnight force a day.” ⁸

What follows:

“For thou wert ⁹ once a flowret blooming wild,

“Close by ¹⁰ the source, bright, pure, and undefiled,

“Whence gush the streams of song;—

seems to be in allusion to my early love of poetry, and its origination in the sublimest sources:

“From Sion’s Hill, and Siloa’s brook that flowed

“Fast by the Oracle of God.” ¹¹

or, as he uses mythological metaphors, to my admiration of Homer above all the heathen Poets of antiquity. My transformation to “a fish of gold” may refer to my having been devoted to a secular and uncongenial employment, in which I was engaged at the time he knew me. What he says more is at present involved in obscurity. “The ¹² blackeyed Swan upon the widen-

⁷ See II, 181n.

⁸ Not identified.

⁹ wast.

¹⁰ to.

¹¹ *Paradise Lost*, I.10-12.

¹² A.

ing stream," moving in silent solitary pride towards the Ocean of eternity, and singing at its death, is a beautiful imagination. But I can proceed no further. Coming events cast their shadows before.¹³ I think I can dimly see the signification of the remaining symbols: but I will not venture to interpret them till Time has verified my surmises.

I regret that this Letter respecting Keats should be so barren of information interesting to his biographer. I trust it will at least shew my respect for his memory, and my willingness to respond to your wishes.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

G. F. Mathew.

R. M. Milnes Esq. M. P.¹⁴

→ 213 ←

WILLIAM HASLAM TO R. M. MILNES

5 February 1847

Printed in *Letters*, p. xlv.

Copthall Court

5th Feb^r 1847

Dear Sir

I am favoured with your note of yesterday I was gratified to hear lately from M^r Severn that you were certainly proceeding with a memoir of John Keats, and I immediately looked up such letters as I cou'd find and about three weeks ago called upon M^r Severn with them—went generally over them, and begged of him to arrange for my seeing you with him, as soon as might be after you shou'd come to London— He is a sad

¹³ Thomas Campbell, "Lochiel's Warning," line 56.

¹⁴ On the blank leaf that follows Mathew wrote "Of John Keats."

fellow—and having heard nothing from him, I wrote to him three days ago—

I regret that my engagements for to morrow will preclude my waiting upon you as requested—but I write to Severn to beg that he will see you and arrange for my meeting you & himself on Wednesday or on Thursday either at your residence or at his own, and I will request of *you* if you please to inform me what arrangement is made.—The hour wou'd suit me perfectly well, or I wou'd make it eleven or twelve if you wou'd rather.—

The letters I have, are Severns letters written from the Downs—on the voyage and after their arrival— Letters of Keats I have found none ¹— They probably were so well, or intended to be so well taken care of, that every endeavour to lay my hand upon them has proved unavailing.—Severns however are highly interesting.—

I remain Dear Sir

Yours faithfully

W. Haslam

»» 214 ««

CAROLINE MATHEW TO G. F. MATHEW ²

9 February 1847

Northam

n^r Bideford.

Devon Feb. 9th

1847

My dear Cousin

Your letter was forwarded to me one day last week but I have been unable to reply to it sooner and now I fear you will

¹ Only two addressed to Haslam are in *Letters*, pp. 343, 439, but a third letter is printed in Hewlett, p. 425, and the Hampstead Keats, VIII, 239.

² Enclosed in the letter next following. Colvin, p. 24, who quotes two

think my answer very unsatisfactory for it is quite out of my power to assist you in any way in the work you purpose to take in hand in fact my memory will not suffice to answer correctly even the questions you ask tho' I believe I may with certainty say that it was at our house you were introduced to John Keats, and if I remember right it was his brother George who introduced him to us; and I know we were acquainted with him intimately for many years but how many I cannot possibly say; as for describing his person or the character of his mind I have no ability or talent for that and cannot go further than to say I always thought he had a very beautiful countenance and was very warm and enthusiastic in his character. He wrote a great deal of poetry at our house but I do not recollect whether I ever had any of it, I certainly have none now: Ann had many pieces of his which she says she gave to poor William Large some years before his death but they have not been found among his papers therefore I cannot tell what he did with them.—My recollection of those days is perhaps very different to yours, I cannot reflect on them with any degree of pleasure or satisfaction, they were worse than useless, and the idols we were then worshiping were self and the world—gratifying the former and living wholly to the latter: I never refer to them but to magnify the grace of God

sentences, describes the letter as written "in a weariful strain of evangelical penitence for the frivolities" of past days.

Caroline and Ann were the daughters of a yeast merchant and cooper, Felton Mathew, 112 Goswell Street. George Keats introduced his brother to them sometime after 1811 (Blunden, *English*, I [1936], 47). They in turn introduced the Keats brothers to their cousin G. F. Mathew. In 1815, while they were on a summer vacation at Hastings, Keats wrote for them the verses "To Some Ladies" and "On Receiving a Curious Shell and a Copy of Verses." On the death of their father in 1819 they moved to Ansford, Somerset, and on the death of their mother in 1830 to Bath (the same, p. 51n., and see also his *Votive Tablets* [1931], p. 252). Unknown to their cousin, they had moved to Bideford "some years" before he wrote to Caroline.

and acknowledge His long suffering goodness in not having cut us off in the midst of those days of folly and in awakening both Ann and myself to a sense of our danger ere it was too late.—Poor John Keats! if it were possible for him to return to us now he would not direct our attention to his own works, beautiful as I believe many of them are; no; he would point us to that Book which as the Word of the living God and therefore the unerring standard of Truth solemnly warns us to prepare for that awful day which it tells us will come as a thief in the night—he might tell us too of the happiness of those who having repented of their sins thankfully embraced the offer of mercy through a crucified Saviour and are now before the throne singing the praises of God and of the Lamb;—or he might tell us of the unutterable misery of those who rejecting the *only* way of escaping that misery through the blood and righteousness of Christ have perhaps wholly neglected the care of the soul or presumptuously ventured into the presence of a holy God clothed in the “filthy rags” of their own righteousness will therefore be found to be without the wedding garment and then bound hand and foot will be cast into outer darkness.³ That you my dear Cousin as well as myself may at the last great day be found among the happy number of those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb is the sincere desire and fervent prayer of

Your affectionate Cousin

Caroline Mathew

P S/ I have for some years been living with M^r & M^{rs} Large in this beautiful part of Devon. I hope yourself and family are all well remember me kindly to them

³ Caroline thought in Biblical language, and here she borrows from, among others, Isaiah 64:6, Matthew 8:12, 22:11-13.

» 215 «

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES¹

11 February 1847

Address: paid./ R. M. Milnes Esq. M. P./ 26 Pall Mall. *Postmarks:* Kennington 2^D PAID; PD FE 12 1847 10 FN.

4 Princes Square, Kennington,
11 th February, 1847.

Dear Sir.

I fear you were much disappointed at the communication I made to you respecting poor Keats. I called on you yesterday to shew you a Letter I had received from my cousin respecting him I beg to enclose it and shall feel obliged if you will let it be returned to me when you have glanced it over. She is mistaken in supposing that I was myself engaged in the work for which I requested her contributions. I expect some interesting materials from two other quarters: ² should I succeed I will hand them over to you as I receive them. I should have liked much to have seen you yesterday, but understanding from the person who opened the door that you were engaged I did not wait. I should be happy to be informed when I might chance to find you at leisure. I take the liberty of handing you a specimen or two of my own writings, and as I am leading a Diogenesian life at present should be happy to render you any service in my power.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obedient Servant

G. F. Mathew.

¹ Mathew enclosed the preceding letter as well as copies of eight poems (No. 216) by himself.

² One quarter was Henry Stephens (No. 221).

» 216 «

G. F. MATHEW: EIGHT POEMS¹

11 February 1847

I. Of Truth.

The words and actions of the good and sage
 Light and delight afford to every age.
 Truth shines forever like the glorious Sun,
 And blesses all it sheds its rays upon.
 Tis sweet to hear it spoken, and to read
 In books the precepts that from Truth proceed.
 Brighter than diamonds in the royal crest,
 Richer than gold in countless heaps possessed,
 Lovelier than woman, howsoever fair,—
 To me, O Truth! thy sacred precepts are.
 Who loves thee not? for thee who would not die?
 For thee e'en dangers worse than death defy?
 No other home than thy home let me know;
 Where'er thou goest thither let me go;

¹ Enclosed in the letter preceding, but their date of composition is unknown. Woodhouse (Morgan MS., pp. 52f.) remarks: "I am not aware that Mr M. has ever published any of his Compositions" (but see II, 180n.), and then gives three poems of Mathew's, beginning, "Oh thou, who delightest in fanciful song," "Oh—, thou bright beam of joy," and "Thine eyes are bright, thy face is fair." Other poems by him and Frederick Leffler (see No. 208) in an unpublished manuscript book are quoted by Blunden, *English*, I (1936), 48, who has discovered that in 1908 and 1909 his son, H. R. Mathew, published to aid "the Building Fund of the New Church of St. Stephen for Norbury and Thornton Heath," *Selections from MS. Poems by G. F. Mathew (Deceased) and The Poetical Remains, etc., of George Felton Mathew*. Since these pamphlets are difficult to come upon, it seems worth while to publish the eight poems Mathew sent to Milnes.

Where thou abidest there let me abide,
And ne'er be tempted to forsake thy side.
Thy chosen people also shall be mine;
The same my Faith, my Hope, my Love, as thine.
Thy God shall be my God: and as in thee
He dwells, and thou in Him, so dwell in me,
Celestial Truth! and let me dwell in Thee.
And when thy voice shall cease to heave my heart,
And when my feet shall from thy paths depart,
Let sterile darkness o'er my soul prevail,
And life's warm current at its fountain fail.

II. Of Solitude.

Not for the palace or the mart of trade
Were my weak nerves and trembling feelings made.
I never cared for honor or for wealth;
I loved my liberty, I longed for health.
The humblest cottage was my highest aim,
With an unheeded, unobtrusive name.
To hear my nothings monstered I abhorred
E'en more than an unkind censorious word.
Amidst the stars of heaven I loved to be;
Or on the sandy floor of the salt sea:
Or on the green hill's side; or in the groves
Where happy birds in secret sing their loves;
Where lofty trees their giant branches spread
And sometimes peace inspire, and sometimes dread,
As to each other whispering, they say
'What lonely man is he who comes this way?
If bad we will affright him; but if good,
We'll welcome him to our stern solitude.'

Such scenes I loved; nor would the gentle Muse
Sometimes her much loved company refuse,
From memory's records with a ready pen
Bright truths reflected to reflect again,
Or from that Book, all other books above,
To fill my Soul with light, my heart with love.

III. Of Hope.

Hope paints the horizon with light's golden streak
To cheer the heart which else with grief would break.
Midst threatening clouds she shews her lovely form,
And bids us bide the sequel of the storm.
Did not the Enchantress thus still keep in view,
The race of this life would be run by few:
But with seductive smile and amorous song,
She lures the still confiding soul along.
O'er hills and dales, o'er rocky steeps and seas,
To far off lands she leads her votaries,
Now near, now distant, now just out of sight,
She haunts us thro' the day, and thro' the night
Visits our slumbers with her visions bright.
But ah! on earth she owns no place of rest,
No home in which to make her followers blest:
No blissful Eden, no Elysian groves
Where dwells forever all that fancy loves.
Beyond the tomb alone we can possess
Her sweetly whispered smiling promises:
Yet e'en from infancy to hoary hairs,
She is the playful solace of our cares,
Draws o'er our heads her bow of brilliant dyes,
Strews with fair flowers life's stern sterilities,

And leaves us not until she lays us down
In the lone grave, and smooths our last death frown,
With promise of a bright immortal crown.

IV. Of Prayer.

When to my peaceful pillow I repair,
I need no other dormitive than prayer,
No other laudanum to make me sleep,
And my tired soul in sweet repose to steep,
Than 'O my God, whose servant I would be,
Accept my humble efforts to please thee.
All sin and error from my soul remove,
And make me worthy of thy heavenly love.
My friends and kindred circle with thy care;
Keep them forever in thy faith and fear:
Thy holy will throughout the world reveal;
The feeble strengthen, the afflicted heal,
The wandering to the path of right recall,
The good encourage, and the bad appal.
Sceptics convince, the darkened mind illumine,
Let all the world to thy allegiance come.'
This said, though never more to me may rise
The glorious sun, secure I close my eyes,
Content to rest till time his course fulfil
And all the pageantry of life stand still;
'Till quick and dead the archangel's trumpet hear,
And in the presence of their Judge appear.

V. Of War.

War is the guardian stern of gentle Peace.
The tenderest object of his love she is;

The source of all his wild solicitude.
 That no harsh sound may on her rest intrude,
 Nor shape of fear disturb her soft repose,
 O'er her fair form his crimson vest he throws,
 And lays his naked sword beneath her head.
 Dark foes around her stand in distant dread:
 Should they take courage, and approach too near,
 She starts, and heavenward on the wings of fear
 Trembling she flies, dissolving from the sight,
 A radiant Vision of the dreamy night.
 War then beholds her vacant place of rest:
 And darts around the fury of his breast
 In looks terrific:—grasps his mighty sword;
 Hell hears the astounding summons of its Lord.
 Its two leaved ² gates abroad are rudely hurled,
 And fiends and furies rush upon the world.
 In lightnings, thunder, and the roaring winds
 And raging billows, War fit emblems finds.
 But language holds its peace, while Silence, loud
 As heaven's artillery, tells the tale of blood.
 Wives, daughters, sisters, all that home endears,
 And secret loved ones, are her auditors.
 I hear their stifled sobs, I see their frequent tears.
 Alas, how poor a recompense to them
 Is the faint echo of a Soldier's fame.

The storm is spent,—the sulphurous clouds depart,
 The life drops trickle from the Warrior's heart,—
 The brave and base in heaps promiscuous rise
 To gentle peace a dreadful sacrifice.
 Silence ensues—the silence of the grave.
 The power to kill has proved the power to save—

² Apparently leaved changed from tiered.

Peace is invoked, nor is invoked in vain.
War clasps her in his guardian arms again.

VI. Of Friendship.

True friends by Virtue only can be won.
'Love all men, trust a few, do wrong to none.'
About thy Faith make no unseemly noise:
But heed within thy conscience' still small voice.
In thy vocation diligence display,
And justice in thy dealings like noontday.
'Live and let live.' Respect to high and low,
According to their several stations show:
Chiefly to those whose duty tis to stand
Above thee, and thy services command.
To those who are to thee subordinate,
And on thy business or thy pleasure wait,
Be ever courteous and considerate.
'Love thyself last.' Let not ambition lurk,
Nor avarice in the motives of thy work.
One purpose have: this singleness of mind:
To serve thy God, thy Country, and mankind.
These are the means whereby thou shalt obtain
God's favor, and the friendship of good men,
These are the means whereby thou shalt possess,
Both temporal and eternal happiness.

VII. Of Socrates.

When he whom Grecian Oracles confest
To be of men the wisest and the best,—
The good old Socrates was doomed to death
For teaching Greece a more enlightened faith,

Bidding her spurn tradition's crafty lies,
And learn of simple Nature to be wise;
How looked, what said he in that trying hour,
Which was to prove his spirit's utmost power?
The poisoned cup into his hand was given,
Which, firmly taking, he looked up to heaven,
And said, with sweet composure, whether or no
My deeds have pleased my God I do not know,
But this I know, my purpose it hath been,
And that my purpose hath by him been seen.
Conscious of this, my soul, upheld by faith
In his great mercy, fearlessly meets death.

Erasmus, when he read this, tho' allied
To Rome's proud church, yet all unbigoed,
Kissing the book, cried out in extacy,
"Ora pro nobis, Sancté Socraté.

VIII. Of Diogenes.

As Alexander, the great conqueror,
One day, to w[h]ile away a vacant hour,
The streets of Corinth paced, by chance he saw
Snug in his tub, reclining on some straw,
Diogenes, the great philosopher.

To whom the monarch said in courtly mood
'Diogenes, if I can do thee good,
I know thy merit, ask, and it is done.'
'Move on then from betwixt me and the Sun
Quoth the rough Cynic, nor my soul deprive
Of what with all thy power thou canst not give
Be thou the sun of sycophants and slaves;
My soul no chains of golden slavery craves

The humblest lot I would not change for thine
While light and truth and liberty are mine

The generous monarch smiling turned aside
And thus to his attendant courtiers cried,
'Were I not Alexander, it would please
My spirit next, to be Diogenes.

» 217 «

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH TO R. M. MILNES

15 February 1847

Sir

I have to offer my humble apology for a piece of carelessness which may cause you some gratuitous trouble.

The letter you enclosed to me yesterday for the Rev^d Thomas Burbidge,¹ British Chaplain at Trieste, was by some unaccountable mistake while I was writing the letter in which I proposed to forward it, thrown as I believe into the fire.

I have only to state the fact, & to remind you, if necessary, that my friend's letter related to some relation of the poet Keats now living in America.

I am, Sir,

Yours very faithfully

A. H. Clough.

Oriel College, Oxford,
Monday, Feb^y 15th

¹ See No. 211.

» 218 «

COVENTRY PATMORE¹ TO R. M. MILNES23 February² 184712 Arundel Street, Strand.
Tuesday Night.

My dear Sir,

The volume of Keats's letters reached me last night in safety. It will indeed, as you say, be a labour of love³ to me to transcribe them.

I have, also, to thank you for the Card for Lord Northampton's Soirées. I look forward with much pleasure to Saturday evening and to Sunday morning—hoping to meet you upon both occasions.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Ever faithfully your's,

Coventry K. Patmore.

R. M. Milnes Esq^{re}

¹ Poet (1823–1896), author of *The Angel in the House* (1854–1862). See Nos. 220 and 232.

² Tuesday was probably February 23, for in a letter of February 26, 1847, Patmore (*Memoirs and Correspondence*, ed. Basil Champneys, II [1900], 144) tells H. S. Sutton, "I have a volume of Keats's manuscript letters by me. They do not increase my attachment to him. But his power of expression is truly wonderful." By March 17 (the same, I, 94) he was telling Alfred Fryer, "Keats's letters are equal to the writings of Emerson, and resemble them." Champneys (I, 65–67) remarks that Patmore "rendered Milnes considerable help," though "of what kind and to what extent" cannot be ascertained, as Milnes's correspondence throws "no light on the subject," and as he failed to acknowledge "Patmore's assistance in the preface." Colvin, p. 532, is correct in saying that Milnes had "some measure of secretarial help" from Patmore. See I, cxv f.

³ See II, 151n.

» 219 «

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES¹

3 March 1847

4 Prince's Square, Kennington.

3 rd March, 1847.

Dear Sir.

I am happy to inform you that I have discovered a channel thro' which I have every expectation of obtaining for you some interesting anecdotes of John Keats as well as some of his unpublished Poems.² A diligent search is to be made and the result is to be reported to me as early as possible.

When I had the pleasure of seeing you on Friday week I was induced to tell you something of myself: something of

"my³ travels strange,

"And all the wonders of the mazy range" &c.

(to use Keats's language.)— My discharge from the Poor Law Commission has never been explained to me. I doubt some foul play. I had been previously accused of communicating with the Times Newspaper, but satisfactorily cleared myself of that suspicion.⁴ Sure I am that neither Dr. Bowring nor Mr. Chadwick⁵

¹ Endorsed by Milnes "Felton Mathew."

² See No. 221.

³ The "Epistle" to Mathew *has* thy.

⁴ The *Times* made much use of his pamphlet, *The Cause of the Poor Defended Against the Poor Law Commissioners* (1834), which Blunden (*English*, I [1936], 51f.) describes as "a very energetic reply to charges against the lower ranks on 'their want of industry, providence, and temperance—charges all of them alike indefinite, frivolous and unjust.'" See II, 243.

⁵ John Bowring, LL.D. (1792–1872), knighted in 1854, linguist, writer, traveler, ardent disciple of Jeremy Bentham. See II, 137n., 433, 436. Edwin Chadwick (1800–1890), sanitary reformer, was secretary to the New Poor Law Commission from 1834 until December 17, 1847, when a different commission was appointed under a new act.

nor any other person can say anything to my dishonor; and I served the Government in the capacity of an amanuensis during a period of ten years.

In writing against the Bill for the amendment of the old law before it passed the legislature, if I was wrong, it was for presuming to interfere in matters above my abilities and position; and I can only plead that as the proposed law was odious to me because I traced in it the principles of the parties with whom it originated, and I was promised an appointment on the Commission if it passed, a conflict was unhappily created between my interest and what I conceived to be my duty. The passing of the Bill, however, unsettled my opinion of the rectitude of my judgment; I accepted the appointment offered me, and never said a word against the measure afterwards.

Whatever may be the opinions of others with respect to the principles of Mr. Bentham, Dr. Bowring, and Mr. Chadwick on subjects of the most vital interest to society, I can only say that they were contrary to the principles of my education, my natural feelings, and very limited experience of the world. Mr. Bentham's disposal of his body for dissection,—his having his skeleton preserved and habited in his eccentric costume,⁶ to be seated annually at table in the midst of his disciples seemed to me worse than absurd: while doctrines, which I had never before heard of, made me anxious not be identified with a Sect, entertaining, as I deemed them, such pernicious tenets.

Since my dismissal from the Poor Law Commission therefore my situation has been peculiarly helpless. I have been scrupulous of applying to Mr. Chadwick or Dr. Bowring, because of the inconsistency of being associated with men with whose principles I do not wish to be identified: on the other hand I have thought it improper to solicit protection from their

⁶ At University College, London.

opponents. It would be a noble act on the part of a good man towards my numerous family thus placed in the most painful situation to say one word by way of appeal in our behalf. It would do more than I could do for myself under the circumstances to dispel the cloud which has been hanging over us, and restore us to the sunshine of heaven. If the Biographer of Keats could do this he would win the heartfelt gratitude of those who I am sure are not unworthy of the blessing, and I should pursue my course, as Keats concludes his Epistle,

“O’er pebbly chrystal and o’er golden sands

Kissing my ⁷ daily food from Naiads’ ⁸ pearly hands” —
that is, I suppose, from the cold hands of charity, in the service of the Poor Law Commission.

In the meantime, should you or any of your friends have manuscripts which you wish to be transcribed, I shall feel much obliged to you for such employment.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obed. Serv^t

G. F. Mathew.

⁷ Keats *has* thy.

⁸ Keats *has* Naiad’s.

» 220 «

COVENTRY PATMORE¹ TO R. M. MILNES

24 March 1847

5 Brecknock Crescent,²
Camden Town,
March 24.

My dear M^r Milnes,

I send you Keats's letters. The second was not marked for copying, but I copied it, thinking the omission might have been accidental.

This interest of these last letters, with Severn's, is nothing short of *frightful* to me. I leave off copying them, with much the same impression as I awoke with, last night, after a very dreadful nightmare. Seldom has there appeared a contribution to some future "Philosophy of Human Nature" of such importance as your "Life of Keats" will be.

With many thanks for the favour of having been among the first to see all these terrible letters—for, from the beginning, there was a whisper of the end,—

I remain,

My dear M^r Milnes,
Ever sincerely your's
Coventry K. Patmore.

R. M. Milnes Esq.

¹ See No. 218.

² The address of Samuel Gray, Esq., according to the *Post Office London Directory* for 1847.

»» 221 ««

HENRY STEPHENS¹ TO G. F. MATHEWMarch (?) 1847²Colvin, pp. 30-32, 271, prints extracts.³To, G. F. Mathew Esq^{re}

Dear Sir,

I am sorry I should have delayed so long sending my promised recollections of the Poet John Keats, but I have

¹ Lowell, I, 187, says that Keats made some warm friends during his days as a medical student, and that "Henry Stephens cared enough about him to copy the whole of his *Poems*, 1817 into a blank book." She follows, of course, the description given by W. R. Nicoll and T. J. Wise's *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*, II (1896), 275-278. They say that the manuscript (then owned by Forman, now at Harvard) has the title page, "Poems/ by/ John Keats/ with several never/ yet published/ . . . London/ written by H. Stephens/ for/ I. J. Towers./ 1828./" Since all subsequent students have hereby been misled, it is worth mentioning that the title page actually ends, "London/ written by J C Stephens/ for/ I J Towers./ 1828./" The beautiful, uniform handwriting of J. C. Stephens suggests that he (or she) was a professional copyist. See II, 465n. Stephens published two books, *A Treatise on Obstructed and Inflamed Hernia* (1829) and *Cholera* (1849; 3d ed., 1854), introduced "creosote into medical practice as a therapeutical agent," and later (see II, 247) became an ink manufacturer. In 1884 Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson (*Disciples of Aesculapius*, I [1900], 20), from whom (p. 21) the foregoing quotation is taken, wrote of Stephens as "one of my dearest friends" from 1856 till his death in 1864. "Stephens," Richardson says, "was never weary in telling me about Keats."

² This transcript, apparently not by Mathew, is evidently the "communication" referred to in the following letter. Colvin, p. 532, reverses the facts by saying that Stephens "both contributed his own recollections of the poet in youth and procured those of Mr Felton Mathew." Mathew was introduced to Stephens, apparently in 1847, by Emma Severn (see II, 247).

³ He silently omits words and sentences, and runs in comments made by Richardson in 1884. Some details from the letter are also in *Aldine*, pp. xiv f.

really had so many engagements in Business which would not allow of any postponement, that I have been obliged to put off my promise to you until I could find more leisure, I now seize a few vacant moments to put down what I can recollect.—

Whether it was in the latter part of the year 1815 or the early part of the year 1816 that my acquaintance with “John Keats”—commenced I cannot say. We were both students at the United Hospitals of St Thomas’ & Guys, and we had apartments in a house in St Thomas’ Street, kept by a decent respectable woman of the name of Mitchell,⁴ I think.—It was usual at that time, and I⁵ dare say is so still, for two or three students to hire a joint Sitting room and separate bed Rooms in the same House— When I first went to the house, I joined in a sitting room with a Student of the name of Mackreth,⁶ who is now living in Yorkshire; at that time, in the same house, three other students occupied an Apartment, or Sitting Room, jointly, on another floor, One of these was “John Keats” the other was Mr Georg[e] Cooper who is now, or was not long since practising as Surgeon & Apothecary at Brentford, & the other was the late Mr Fred^k Tyrrell since Surgeon at St Thomas’s Hospital, Mr George Cooper and Mr Tyrrell being older students than Keats, had completed their studies & removed from their lodging.—John Keats, being alone, & to avoid

⁴ Samuel Wilks and G. T. Bettany, *A Biographical History of Guy’s Hospital* (1892), p. 433, quote from “South’s ‘Memoirs’”: “George Cooper, of Brentford, told me that whilst at Guy’s Hospital, where he was dresser to Sir Astley Cooper for eighteen months, he lived in St. Thomas’s Street, at a tallow-chandler’s named Markham, and where John Keats the poet lived with him, having been placed under his charge by Sir A. Cooper.”

⁵ *Written* I I.

⁶ George Wilson Mackereth, “whose daughter,” according to Richardson, “married Mr. Stephens’ eldest son, the present [1884] Mr. Henry Stephens, of Avenue House, Finchley.” Mackereth’s seal and autograph, presented by his son to F. H. Day, are in the Harvard Keats Collection.

the expense of having a Sitting room to himself, asked to join us, which we readily acceded to, We were therefore constant Companions & the following is what I recollect of his previous History from conversations with him.—Of his Parentage I know nothing, for upon that subject I never remember his speaking, I think he was an orphan, I remember once his calling on a Mr Abbey of the firm of Abbey & Cock, I do not now remember the — Street, I think they were Merchants or Wholesale Dealers,—M^r Abbey was I believe his Guardian, He had been apprenticed to a M^r Hammond Surgeon of Southgate, from whence he came on the completion of his time to the Hospitals, His passion if I may so call it, for Poetry was soon manifested—

“It was the Goal, to whence his wishes bent
Where every hope, where every thought was sent
Concent’red there, he lived for it alone”——

He attended Lectures and went through the usual routine, but he had no desire to excel in that pursuit, In fact Medical Knowledge was beneath his attention, for—

“When the young Eagle with exulting eye
Had learn’d to dare the splendour of the sky,
Would his free wing, from that Majestic height
Descend, to follow some less magic light?” ^{6a}—

No— Poetry was to his mind the zenith of all his Aspirations— The only thing worthy the attention of superior minds— So he thought— All other pursuits were mean & tame, He had no idea of Fame, or Greatness, but as it was connected with the pursuits of Poetry, or the Attainment of Poetical excellence, The greatest men in the world were the Poets, and to rank among them was the chief object of his ambition.—It may readily be imagined that this feeling was accompanied with a good deal of Pride and some conceit, and that amongst mere

^{6a} Misquoted from Felicia Hemans, *The Sceptic* (1820), lines 1, 2, 5, 6.

Medical students, he would walk, & talk as one of the Gods might be supposed to do, when mingling with mortals, This pride had exposed him, as may be readily imagined, to occasional ridicule, & some mortification,—

Having a taste & liking for Poetry myself, though at that time but little cultivated, he regarded me as something a little superior to the rest, and would gratify himself frequently, by shewing me some lines of his writing, or some new idea which he had struck out. We had frequent conversation on the merits of particular poets, but our tastes did not agree, He was a great admirer of Spencer, His *Fairy Queen* was a great favorite with him, Byron was also in favor, Pope he maintained was no poet, only a versifier. I was fond of the bold, nervous & declamatory kind of Poetry, He was fond of Imagery, The most trifling Similes appeared to please him, Sometimes I ventured to show him some lines which I had written, but I always had the mortification of hearing them—condemned, indeed he seemed to think it presumption in me to attempt to head along the same pathway as himself, at however humble a distance—

He had two Brothers, who visited him frequently, & they worshipped him. They seemed to think their Brother John was to be exalted, & to exalt the family name.—I remember a Student from St Bartholomew's Hospital who came often to see him, as they had formerly been intimate, but though old friends they did not always cordially agree, Newmarsh or Newmarch[†] (I forget which was his name) was a Classical Scholar, as was Keats, & therefore they scanned freely the respective merits of the Poets of Greece & Rome. Whenever "Keats" showed Newmarch any of his Poetry it was sure to be ridiculed, and severely handled.—Newmarch was a light hearted, & merry fellow, but I thought he was rather too fond of mortifying Keats, but more

[†] Lowell, I, 88, refuses to believe in his existence. To her he is a Mrs. Harris—or Mrs. Jones (see II, 469).

particularly his brothers, as their praise of their Brother John amounted almost to idolitry, & Newmarsh & they frequently quarrelled.—Whilst attending lectures, he would sit & instead of Copying out the lecture, would often scribble some doggrell rhymes, among the Notes of Lecture, particularly if he got hold of another Student's Syllabus— In my Syllabus of Chemical Lectures he scribbled many lines on the paper cover, This cover has been long torn off, except one small piece on which is the following fragment of Doggrel rhyme

“Give me wine & snuff
Until I cry out, “hold! enough”
You may do so, sans objection
Until the day of resurrection,”⁸

This is all that remains, & is the only piece of his writing which is now in my possession.—He was gentlemanly in his manners & when he condescended to talk upon other subjects he was agreeable & intelligent, He was quick & apt at learning, when he chose to give his attention to any subject.—He was a steady quiet and well behaved person, never inclined to pursuits of a low or vicious—Character. His absolute devotion to Poetry prevented his having any other tastes, or indulging in any vice—He was gentle, & courteous in his manner to Females, I do not think that Love was a passion to which he would have condescended. He would have been pleased to find himself admired by the Fair Sex, for his Genius, but not for his person.—His Stature was rather under the middle Size, His Face was thin with prominent cheek bones, a well formed nose—Forehead rather receding, characteristic more of the Poet than the Philosopher, I remember the time of his first introduction to

⁸ From a leaf of this syllabus, now in Trinity College, Cambridge, Garrod, p. 552, printed the poem, which begins, “Give me women, wine and snuff,” and has a final couplet omitted by Stephens, “For bless my beard they aye shall be/ My beloved Trinity.”

M^r Leigh Hunt, who then Edited the Examiner, & I remember several pieces of his Poetry being inserted in that Journal, at which he was exceedingly gratified, I remember his also telling me of an introduction he had to two or three Young Poets of Promise & among them I remember well the name of Shelley—I also remember his showing me some time afterwards 'the Examiner' in which was an Article under the Title of 'the Rising Poets' or 'the Young Poets' ⁹ or some such Title in which the names of several were inserted with a brief sketch of them & a Specimen of their Poetry, and the name of John Keats appeared among them, with that of Shelley.—

This sealed his fate and he gave himself up more completely than before to Poetry, He did indeed present himself at Apothecaries' Hall for examination, it being soon after the passing of the Apothecaries' Act, He surprise(d) many of us by his passing that examination as he had appeared to pay so little attention to his profession, but he was very quick in acquiring any thing & his knowledge of the Classics helped him a good deal in that examination, for it was the examination in Latin which the student[s] most feared, who presented themselves for examination there, I don't know what it is now, but at that time the examinations were more a test of Classical, than Medical—Knowledge.—He was a tolerable swimmer for I remember going with him once to the New River, to Bathe—he plunged at once in, & swam tolerably well, but he complained after he came out as if the Bathing did not agree with him.—He used to go with his neck nearly bare á lá Byron The collar turned down & a ribbon tied round his neck without any neck-erchief. He also let his moustachios grow occasionally.—

After the period of our Studies were finished, at the Hospitals we saw little more of each other. He once went into the

⁹ "Young Poets" (Shelley, Keats, Reynolds) appeared in the issue for December 1, 1816, p. 761.

Country with me on a visit to my friends and stopped a day or two. He did not generally make the most favorable impression upon people where he visited, He could not well unbend himself & was rather of an unsocial disposition, unless he was among those who were of his own tastes, & who would flatter him.—

Some little time after I had settled in Medical Practice—I saw John Keats for the last time, His brother George had been recently married & he with his wife & brother John, were on a journey some where Northward, & as the Coach stopped to dine¹⁰ in the place where I practised as a Surgeon, he sent me a Message to say he was at the Inn. I went & saw them. Our interview was brief, he enquired a little into my prospects and I into his, I found he had no intention of practising in the Medical profession, but was still devoted to Poetry, His brother George's wife was rather short, not what might be strictly called handsome, but looked like a being whom any man of moderate Sensibility might easily love. She had the imaginative poetical cast.—Somewhat singular & girlish in her attire, whether from her own taste, or whether she had accommodated herself to the taste of her husband, or to that of the Poet, the presiding Genius of the family, I know not; but there was something original about her, & John seemed to regard her as a being whom he was delighted to honour, & introduced her to me with an evident satisfaction. As I before said, our Interview was short—they departed by the Coach, & I to my home, & this was the last I ever saw of John Keats.—

A short time afterwards I heard of him as an Author who had attracted some Notice, & I read a review of some of his Works in the Quarterly— This was the review which has been charged with being the death of him, but Hereditary disposi-

¹⁰ At Redbourne, June 22, 1818.

tion combined with an ungenial Climate gave rise to Tubercular Consumption, as I have reason to believe, for which his visit to Rome, though it might be an alleviation, was no cure, The review was indeed a cutting one, & to a mind so sensitive inflicted a severe wound.—I remember a passage in it which gave a quotation from his Poem I think *Endymion* where one line ended with

“The Musk rose blooms”

& the next with

“The Tombs
of the mighty dead”—

The reviewer in giving this quotation, said something like the following “This author seems to write without any reference to the sense or the connection of one passage with another, but anything will suit his purpose, so that it will rhyme— Thus if it had not been for the

“Musk rose Blooms
The Tombs

of the Mighty dead would never have intruded themselves” ¹¹

His Poetry was not generally to my taste, but his Fame is spread, & the world has given him a niche in the Temple of Fame, I have read some of his pieces which have pleased me much, most particularly an ode to the Nightingale which he beautifully describes as the

“Dryad of the Woods” ¹²

He died as I have since understood at Rome at the age of 25, and out of 6 Medical Students who at that time associated together, myself & another only are left, but the world goes on, other young men with similar feelings and similar associations

¹¹ All this is a fair paraphrase of Croker's words in the *Quarterly*, XIX (1818), 206f.

¹² Really “Dryad of the trees.”

rise upon the Stage, & play their part & go off as others have done before, & their loss though felt in their own circle is not much known beyond it, for—

“As the light leaf, whose fall to ruin bears
Some trembling insect’s little world of cares,
Demands in Silence, while around waves on
The mighty Forest reckless what is gone—
Such is mans doom”—

The above is the principal of my recollections of the Poet “John Keats”— It is but trifling but if it supplies any void, it may be acceptable.—I am only sorry it has been so long delayed.—

I am, Sir

Yours very truly,
(signed) Henry Stephens.

»» 222 ««

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES

5 April 1847

4 Princes Square. Kennington.
5 th April, 1847.

Dear Sir.

I am not sure whether in the multitude of your thoughts and engagements you may not have forgotten me & my promise. After several calls I have only now succeeded in obtaining the expected communication respecting *Keats*.¹ It agrees generally with my own recollections. I do not think the Criticism in the Quarterly could have much affected him,² unless he knew it to

¹ The preceding letter.

² Here Mathew echoes the opinions of Severn, Dilke, and Clarke, whereas most of Keats’s other friends—like Bodurtha, pp. 26f.—regarded the savage reviews as at least contributory causes of his death. See II, 95n.

be from the pen of one whose opinion he respected, or on whose kinder notice he had any reason to rely. He was fond of antitheses, & his brother George did not fail to point out one in his Epistle to me which he thought original and happy:

"Where Oaks, which ³ erst the Druid knew, are growing,

"And flowers, the glory of one day, are blowing.

Further on he adds,

"There must be too a ruin dark and gloomy;

"To say '*Joy not too much in all that's bloomy.*'"

So I pity the Critic who could discover nothing but the puerility of rhyme in the association between "blooms" and "tombs."——I am in expectation of being recalled to the unpoetical atmosphere of the Poor Law Commission.* Should anything further respecting Keats reach me, I will send it to you. But I conclude that you have now completed your Life of Keats and that the public will soon be presented with your edition of his Works, comprised "like the ashes of Alexander in a golden Urn within the limits of a little Volume."⁴

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obed. Serv^t

G. F. Mathew.

R. M. Milnes Esq.

* P. S. A kind word from you ⁵ should you be acquainted with any of the Commissioners will much oblige.

³ *Poems* (1817) has that.

⁴ Blunden, *English*, I (1936), 52, notes that this is the final sentence in the preface to the London, 1807, edition of Bacon's *Essays*, p. vii: "[Bacon] may not improperly be considered as shrunk, like the ashes of an Alexander in a golden urn, within the limits of this little but sterling volume."

⁵ See II, 241.

→ 223 ←

WILLIAM HASLAM TO R. M. MILNES

8 May 1847

*Address: R M Milnes Esq^r M P./ Pall Mall./ [In lower left corner]
W Haslam. Postmark (one letter or figure illegible): 1847 MY 10
8 M 8¹ B.*

respecting John Keats

Copthall Court

8 May 1847

Dear Sir,

I have intended to call upon you, but I have had no opportunity, at least at time when I shou'd be likely to meet with you

I searched the Registers of St Stephen Coleman St.—

Thomas Keats—the Brother of John was buried

7th Dec^r 1819²—aged 19—

and Thomas Keats their Father was buried

23rd April 1804—aged 36 [?] ^{2a}

“Killed by a fall from his Horse” is the “cause of death” assigned in the Register.—

I searched for the marriage of the parents and for baptisms of John—George or any of the family—or for any other burials, back to 1786 when the Father wou'd have been but about 19 years of age,—but not a single entry of any kind, save the two I have mentioned.—

As to the age of John Keats at the period of his death, I understood you to say you were satisfied.—If you have any

¹ Or *apparently* 8 M 88.

² Tom was buried on December 7 (not December 3, as Lowell, II, 118, says), but Haslam gave the wrong year 1819, which Milnes, I, 244, corrected to 1818.

^{2a} See Pope, *TLS*, December 22, 1932, p. 977.

doubt—I wou'd endeavour to get the Chancery proceedings in which their property was involved searched in the expectation that the dates when they severally attained 21 years wou'd there be found ³

I remain Dear Sir

Yours very truly

W. Haslam

R M Milnes Esq^r

» 224 «

MRS. WILLIAM HENRY NEVILLE ¹ TO MRS. WILLIAM HOWITT ²

22 May 1847

Esher, May 22nd 1847

Dear M^{rs} Howitt,

I should have replied to your letter sooner, but was anxious to obtain for M^r Monckton Milnes through my cousin M^r George Woodhouse, the manuscript poems which I thought he had of poor Keates'—and I this morning received a letter from him saying—that he would get an introduction to M^r Monckton Milnes, through a mutual friend—and confer with him on the subject of the poet—he will I think also be able to

³ Milnes, I, 4n., notes that the date October, 1795, is established by the Chancery proceedings, in which Keats "is said to have come of age in October, 1816." Hunt thought Keats was born in 1796: see *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (1828), p. 247, and II, 146n.

¹ See No. 23. This letter was sent to Milnes with No. 225. Mary Frogley was "a member of the social circle of the Mathews, the cockney circle in which Keats and his brother George moved in 1814 and 1815" (Finney, I, 34f.). She gave her cousin Richard Woodhouse copies of numerous poems by Keats which she had obtained from George Keats and one Kirkman. In March, 1820, she married William Henry Neville, of Esher.

² Mary Botham Howitt (1799–1888), voluminous author. See Nos. 137 and 225.

get Keates's picture, should it be wished to be seen, as a brother of his, who is now dead ³ had one taken of him— M^r George Woodhouse is now out of Town, and he says he shall not be able to pay attention to my wishes before monday week—but that I hope may be in time to assist M^r Monkton Milnes—⁴

I never had the sketch of him, that you speak of—and I believe all the poems ⁵ he wrote to, and on me, have been published—if I knew they had not, I should be most happy to have sent them, but at all events I think my cousin will have them all—

Make our united Compts to M^r & Miss Howitt,—

I remain my dear Madam—

Yours truly—

M Neville—

»» 225 ««

MRS. WILLIAM HOWITT TO R. M. MILNES

29 May 1847

Clapton May 29

Dear Sir

I send you M^{rs} Neville's reply ¹ to my letter respecting the poems of Keats of which I spoke to you. I am sorry so little has resulted from it. Perhaps more may be obtained from M^r George Woodhouse whom I hope you may see. I wish if you see him you would inquire from him about the little sketch which

³ Richard.

⁴ See No. 227.

⁵ Three sketches were said by William Howitt (*Mary Howitt: An Autobiography*, I [Boston, 1889], 277) to have been in her possession on February 25, 1838.

¹ See the preceding letter.

was taken of Keats the night before his death—² & which Mr Neville shewed us though it seems she does not possess it.

I am dear Sir

Yours truly

Mary Howitt

R. Monckton Milnes Esq

»» 226 ««

W. H. PRIDEAUX TO R. M. MILNES

May 1847 (?) ¹

59 Red Lion Street Holborn ²

Sir

You will, most likely, have reproved my inattention, to

² Actually made on January 28, 1821. Reproduced in Sharp, facing p. 84. The original (Williamson, pp. 102f.) is in the Keats-Shelley Memorial at Rome.

¹ The date is a guess based on the preceding letter. For the transcript Prideaux made of "I stood tip-toe" see Garrod, pp. lx, 3. It is now in the Harvard Keats Collection. Mr. Carl R. Woodring informs me that he was a Chartist and an intimate friend of William and Mary Howitt, and that he is frequently mentioned in the latter's unpublished correspondence with Eliza Meteyard. For example, on October 26, 1846, Mrs. Howitt wrote: "I want now to tell you that we know an excellent friend how good & kind you do not know! who lives in Red Lion Street just below you of the name of Prideaux at No 58 [*sic*]. He is a great Whittington Club man." Mr. Woodring also points out that Prideaux contributed a poem beginning "Young men of every creed! Up, and be doing now" to *Howitt's Journal*, June 26, 1847 (I, 362). Garrod's assertion (pp. lxxix f.), on the authority of Blunden, that Prideaux "is so far connected with Keats that his widow married Sir Charles Dilke" is dismissed by both Miss Gertrude M. Tuckwell and Dilke's former secretary, Mr. H. K. Hudson, as "pure imagination."

² According to the *Post Office London Directory*, 1847, this was the address (no number 58 is recorded) of Scott, Wing, and Company, manufacturers of clocks and watches and wholesale jewelers. In 1854, however, No. 58 was occupied by a cheesemonger named J. H. Chipperfield, No. 59 by W. S. Arnold, watchmaker.

the promise made at M^r Howitts last Sunday concerning the MS lines of Keats. The fact is, I have been endeavouring to obtain a copy of the other portion of the paper which was originally attached to the fragment of the boy-bard—but unsuccessfully: the person who had it has either lost it, or cannot find it; which is pretty much the same thing. Hence the delay & I trust you will consider this a just apology.

I have made a correct copy, with all the interlineations, & erasures.

May I take the liberty of asking a favor at your hands which I have long hoped to get realized? Being a collector of autographs, my desire hath been to obtain any small poem in one of my books from your pen & mind. In the event of a favorable issue, I will forward the Book either to your Publishers or private residence, whichever you may direct. And allow me to remain

Your Obed^t Serv^t

W H Prideaux

Monkton Milnes Esq.

➡ 227 ◀

GEORGE WOODHOUSE TO R. M. MILNES

2 June 1847

R^d Monkton Milnes Esq

89 Hamilton Terrace S^t Johns Wood Road

2 June 1847

Sir,

M^r Howitt¹ lately made application by letter to my

¹ See No. 225. George Woodhouse, born about 1807, was educated at Eton and Exeter College, Oxford, and by 1832 was a solicitor in his brother's firm. He is presumably the George Doveton Woodhouse, solicitor, 3 New Boswell Court, listed in the *Post Office London Directory*, 1847.

Cousin M^r Neville ² of Esher with whom she is acquainted, in the hope of the latter being able to furnishe her with materials for a life of the late John Keats, which M^r Howitt stated that you were engaged upon.

M^r Neville enclosed me the letter she had received from M^r Howitt, and requested me at the same time to further your views if possible, which she thought I might be able to do, from the great intimacy that existed between Keats and one of my Brothers now dead, whose admiration indeed of Keats was unbounded.

I fear I have little in my possession that would interest you: A Collection of poems letters &c of Keats's which my Brother made, was given by me in compliance with the terms of my Brothers Will, to Mr. John Taylor now of Upper Gower Street Bedford Square Bookseller and Publisher to the London University, my Brother considering indeed that they rather belonged to Mr. Taylor ³ than to himself, though he had collected them: And to him, my Brother also bequeathed his Posthumous Portrait of Keats by Hilton,⁴ the late Keeper of the Royal Academy. The Various Medallions that he had made in Rome for presents, after the Cameo by Girometti,⁵ he distributed during his lifetime among personal friends of Keats, some of them known others unknown to himself.

I may perhaps have in an interleaved Copy of some of Keats's poems, some small unpublished pieces, at least some that have not appeared among his published works, though whether they have ever appeared in print in any periodical or not, I cannot say: and this is all. If the perusal of these would gratify you, I should be happy to shew them to you: or if I

² See No. 224.

³ See I, cl.

⁴ See Williamson, p. 105.

⁵ A cameo made from Giuseppe Girometti's clay medallion is in the Keats-Shelley Memorial at Rome. See Williamson, p. 104, who lists various plaster copies.

could assist you by application to Mr. John Taylor, with whom I am acquainted, in regard to the papers or pictures it would give me great pleasure to do so, though of course I cannot answer for Mr. Taylor with regard to the publication of any of the papers: or if you would like to see the full length sitting portrait ⁶ of Keats by Severn, or the original oriental Cameo cut by Girometti I would endeavor to procure you a sight of them with very great pleasure: these are in other hands.

I cannot but suppose it possible you may have already had access to some of these, but I am not informed—

I am sorry my absence from town has prevented my Complying earlier with my Cousins wish, and fulfilling my promise to her to communicate with you: it is about ten days since I heard from her and was favored with a sight of M^r Howitts letter, and I have been unable from the above Cause to offer you any assistance until now—

I have the honor to remain, Sir

Yours very Obedly

George Woodhouse.

»» 228 ««

C. W. DILKE TO R. M. MILNES

2 June 1847 (?)

Bedhampton—Jun 2nd

My dear Sir

Your letter has reached me where poor Keats passed his last day & slept his last night in England. The ship put into Portsmouth, & he drove over to my Sisters, & brought Severn with him.¹

⁶ See I, 249n., and Williamson, p. 105.

¹ Keats and Severn passed the night of September 28, 1820, at Mrs. John Snook's. See No. 73.

I regret to say that I cannot help you even to a conjecture as to the date of the enclosed ²— My *impression* is that it was written in the Autumn of 1819—shortly after or about the time the lodgings were taken in Westminster.³ His mind was then all in a ferment—he was in love & saw the impossibility of maintaining a wife, and, as I suspect, for the first time & *consequent*, the impossibility of maintaining himself— He was therefore full of ‘wise saws’ ⁴ & good resolutions to do something for a living—he *wrote* about surgeon of an Indiaman, but *talked* about a South sea Whaler, and, as if to bid defiance to fortune, would have fixed on something more hateful, could imagination have helped him to it. I incline therefore to 1819, but have no one fact to urge in favor of it.

I am my dear Sir

Yours truly

C W Dilke

»» 229 ««

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE ¹ TO R. M. MILNES

2 July 1847

Paris, 14 Rue d’Angoulême St. Honoré,

July 2. 1847.

Sir,

A much esteemed friend, now resident at Trieste,—the

² Evidently Keats’s letter 212, which is undated, but which in *Letters*, pp. 487f., is assigned to May, 1820.

³ Keats left Winchester for College Street, Westminster, on October 8, 1819, and gave up his quarters there soon after October 19 (*Letters*, pp. xxxi, 435n.).

⁴ *As You Like It*, II.vii.156.

¹ American actor, playwright and diplomat (1781–1852), author of “Home, Sweet Home.” He enclosed the letter next following.

Rev: M^r T: Burbidge,²—has written to me that you are seeking materials for an edition of the entire works of Keats. M^r Burbidge, having seen some unpublished verses of Keats, inserted by the poet's brother in an Album of mine, thought it might give you pleasure to peruse them. I have much gratification in attending to my friend's friend, especially as it enables me to show my respect for one so eminently entitled to it.

Inclosed you will find a copy of the scraps³ alluded to, with the introduction of M^r George Keats, as inserted in my Album. I presume you are aware that the gentleman in question died in America, after having lost a little fortune there; and I have further understood that a very promising daughter of his committed suicide⁴ through mortification at the change made by the father's failure in her position. The widow of M^r George Keats has married again. M^r George D. Prentice of Louisville, Kentucky, knows the family perfectly well, and can probably give you a clue to many remaining manuscripts of the poet, and to a very interesting correspondence with his brother, who himself thought of preparing a new edition of the poems.

M^r George Keats also possessed a fine miniature of his brother.

I enclose a note for M^r Prentice, which may possibly aid you in obtaining the manuscripts & further information, if you desire either or both. M^r Prentice is himself a gentleman of great poetical talent.

The verses of M^r John Keats to his brothers child, appear to me wildly beautiful, though perhaps obnoxious to remark. The writer does not seem to have known that we have had, and

² See No. 211.

³ These are "Fame, like a wayward girl," "As Hermes once," and "'Tis the witching hour of night," all of which Payne printed in 1837.

⁴ Isabel (see I, xcvi-c).

then possessed, many poets in America; though he possibly meant the word "first" to be understood as *greatest*.⁵—Verbal critics may also object to the phrase,

"Though *the linen* that will be
Its swathe is on the *cotton* tree."—

I intend returning to America in a few days; and there, or elsewhere, to execute any wishes of yours will always be a source of pride & pleasure, to

Sir

Your very faithful humble servant

John Howard Payne.

For

R: Monckton Milnes Esq^r, M. P:—

&c

&c

&c

» 230 «

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE TO G. D. PRENTICE ⁶

2 July 1847

Address: George D: Prentice Esquire/ Editor & Proprietor of the/ Louisville Journal,/ Louisville, Kentucky,/ U: S: A.

Paris 14 Rue d'Angoulême St

Honoré, July 2. 1847.

My dear sir,

R: Monckton Milnes Esq^r., M: P:., of England, with whose reputation you are familiar, has some idea of publishing

⁵ Payne refers to the letter containing the verse "Prophecy" (*Letters*, p. 235), wherein Keats said: "If I had a prayer to make . . . it should be that one of your Children should be the first American Poet." See also Payne's comments in the New York *Ladies' Companion*, VII (1837), 185-187.

⁶ Enclosed in the preceding letter. Prentice (1802-1870), a mediocre poet, was the distinguished editor of the Louisville *Daily Journal*.

a full collection of the works of Keats. In a letter to M^r Milnes I have mentioned that you could probably afford him a clue to many unpublished poems of Keats and to his valuable correspondence with the brother who died in Louisville. I have at the same time enclosed to M^r Milnes the present note to you, which, while it reminds you of the visit to Louisville that you so largely contributed to render agreeable to me,⁷ will show that I am desirous of remembering your hospitalities to your advantage, by bringing you into communication with a brother poet of merited eminence, and a gentleman in every way entitled to your best attention.

In the hope of ere long seeing you in America, whither I return presently, and with assurance of my true regard,
believe me,

My dear sir,
very faithfully yours
John Howard Payne.

G: D: Prentice Esquire
&c &c
Louisville, Kentucky.

»» 231 ««

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

2 July 1847

This letter minus its two postscripts is printed by Marsh, pp. 40f.

Newport
Isle of Wight
2^d July 1847

My Dear Sir

Partly illness—partly the arrangements attend^t on the set-

⁷ See II, 183n. for an article that resulted from Payne's visit of 1834.

ting a new Measure into action here; but chiefly <from> a most earnest desire to find the proof of the original preface to *Endymion* (which from the confusion of all things in my transfer of them here <is> perplexes me as to its whereabouts) have delayed my reply to your Letter. I am as yet baffled in my search—but I know I have it somewhere.¹

I regret that your own cause for sorrow ² and *any* cause on my part should delay the work most interesting to all Lovers of a real Poet. Let me hope that you will find now, in the weaving together of your magic web, <find> a solace—which no other labour can so truly bring you!

I send you some—Documents which may be of use. The copy of the Chancery Proceeding will shew you that Keats was born in Oct^r 1795—it also shews the date of the death of his Mother. You may rely on these dates, as they were verified to support the order. I send you also the Administrations &c in my possession.

I also place in your hands the original M.S. of 3 of the Canto's of *Endymion*. These are further interesting as shewing the places at which they were finished and when. With this precious (to me) M.S. I <add> inclose the *original* M.S.S. of the Ode to the Nightingale, & to Psyche.

In my letters—I have a few unpublished Poems—but these of course you have.

I shall be glad to hear immediately that you receive my packet safely; and I am sure I need not say that when you have done with the contents, you will keep them till I receive them at your hands.

Is there anything more I can do, to help you in your

¹ See II, 234n.

² Milnes's mother had died on May 1.

good work for my ever valued friend. I am My Dear Sir

Yours truly

J. H Reynolds

R. M. Milnes Esq

P. S.

I add <the> a few small Poems, lest you should not have seen them. The lines

“Think not of it Sweet One”

&c”

you will find in the *rough* Dra^t at the last page of the Book that contains the 3 last Cantos of Endymion.

The beautiful story of “Isabella” from Boccaccio already printed—was written with the intention of producing <it> in conjunction with myself a Volume of such <Poems> stories—and I inclose you the Title Page of a little forgotten Volume ³ published by me after Keats’s Death—together with the Preface, in which I refer to the subject.

Private

Will you take the trouble to look at the accompanying Paraphrase. It will not take much time. My intention has been, & is, to complete the 4—and publish them, if good enough and if any Bookseller would be my go-between with the Public. I do not think M^r Moxon would be likely to deal with my nettles,—<when> since he is accustomed so to be the Florist in his Trade. I must apologize to you for troubling you thus—but you will forgive me.

³ *The Garden of Florence and Other Poems* (1821). The second post-script may mean that Reynolds was planning to publish other tales from Boccaccio.

» 232 «

COVENTRY PATMORE TO R. M. MILNES

18 August 1847

British Museum.

August 18. 1847.

My dear Mr Milnes,

I will endeavour to ascertain if there is any probability of a vacancy here,¹ and should I hear of there being one or a prospect of one I will write and tell you of it immediately.

I have been puzzled about Keats' Articles in the "Champion."² In a letter dated [by the transcriber?] ³ April 5. 1818 he refers to Papers upon "the Drury Lane Pantomime" and "the Covent Garden Tragedy." Now the only Papers that at all correspond to this date and description are those which I copied for you before you left Town. In another letter dated Dec. 22. 1817 or 1818. there is reference to an Article upon Kean in Richard III. This I find in the Champion for Dec. 21. 1817. and I was led to suppose that probably I had copied the former Articles by mistake and that really they also were in the year 1817. But I find nothing of or near the date April 5th answering in any way to Keats' words in his letter of that date.

¹ Milnes had secured a position in the British Museum for Patmore (*Memoirs and Correspondence* by Basil Champneys, I [1900], 64f.). See Nos. 218 and 220.

² Colvin (pp. 242f.) and Finney (I, 235) say that Keats wrote four articles for the *Champion*: "On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearian Actor," December 21, 1817; "On Kean in 'Richard Duke of York,'" December 28, 1817; "On 'Retribution, or the Chieftain's Daughter,'" January 4, 1818; "On 'Don Giovanni,' a Pantomime," January 4, 1818. For the letters Patmore refers to see *Letters*, Nos. 32 (December 21, 1817) and 34 (January 5, 1818).

³ Bracketed in the original.

I shall have the £15, you were so kind as to lend me, ready by the termination of the four months I mentioned. I suppose that you will be then in Spain; <and> I will therefore pay it into your bank or keep it for you till your return as you may direct.

Will you oblige me by writing me a line to say if the Life of Keats will appear in October? If not I shall not trouble myself to hurry on my Article for the North British.⁴

Believe me,

My dear M^r Milnes,

Ever faithfully your's

Coventry K. Patmore.

P. S. I see that there is another very long Article on Richard III. in the Champion for Dec. 29th I do not think it is by Keats; but I will copy it out and send it you.

»» 233 ««

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

17 April 1848

Printed by Marsh, pp. 41f.

Garrick Club

17 Ap^l 1848

My Dear M^r Milnes

Your letter I have had forwarded to me here. I do not in the least understand the mysterious letters you wish information upon. <To> How did you obtain Copies of them?—The source from whence they came *might* give me a clue.

My poor works have been contributions to the London

⁴ A review of Milnes appeared in that magazine in November, 1848 (X, 38-52).

Magazine when Taylor & Hessey had it—a poem published under the title of “Safie” when a Boy—(a downright imitation of Lord Byron, & who refers to it kindly in his printed Journal & letters)¹—an *Anticipated Parody* of Wordsworth’s Peter Bell—also curiously referred to by L^d B. in a printed letter to Moore,² written at Venice—in which his Lordship attributes it to Moore himself! a share with Hood³ in a work called “Odes & addresses to Great Men” of which I should like you to see a Copy—a little work called “The Fancy—being the Memoir & poetical works of Peter Corcoran”—and a small Volume of Poems intituled “The Garden of Florence” by John Hamilton.”—Two of the Poems in the little Book are from Boccacio—& were to have been published with one or two more,—& Keats was to have joined me—but *he* only wrote Isabella & the Pot of Basil.”—His illness & death put an end to the work—and I referred to the circumstance in my preface. Forgive so much about that poor obscure—baffled Thing,—myself! I am My Dear Sir

Faithf^y yours

J. H Reynolds

R. M. Milnes Esq

¹ On February 20, 1814, Byron (*Works*, ed. R. E. Prothero [*Letters and Journals* (1922)], II, 388; Moore’s *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron* [3d ed., 1833], II, 6) wrote: “Answered—or rather acknowledged—the receipt of young Reynolds’s poem, *Safie*. The lad is clever, but much of his thoughts are borrowed,—*whence*, the Reviewers may find out. I hate discouraging a young one; and I think,—though wild and more oriental than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he has placed his tale,—that he has much talent, and, certainly fire enough.” For his letter of thanks to Reynolds see Prothero, III, 45-48.

² Byron (Prothero, V, 71; Moore, III, 19) asked Moore on August 31, 1820: “Did you write the lively quiz on Peter Bell? It has wit enough to be yours, and almost too much to be any body else’s now going.”

³ The poet, Reynolds’ brother-in-law.

My ⁴ Messenger will wait—but I fear I can be of little use to you. Can I help you on ⁵ proofs?—but I suppose you are only off for a day or two

» 234 «

JOSEPH SEVERN TO R. M. MILNES

5 May 1848 ¹

Address: Richard Moncton Milnes Esq^r M. P./ Meurices Hotel/ Paris.

21 James S^t Buckingham Pal.

Friday May 5

Dear Milnes

Pardon me for not sooner answering yours from Paris but so many things crowd upon my convalescence— D^r Sir James Clark I am most desirous you should mention in the most effective manner as he was so kind & attentive in Keats last illness & death— Keats had a letter of introduction to him & I had one to Canova (from Sir T. Lawrence,² the other I cannot remember who from) these were the only letters we had to Italy.—Sir J. Clark began by getting Keats a lodging just opposite to him so that he might attend him even at night, but Keats case was already desperate or I have not a doubt he would have been able to restore him, for his skill was <great> was only surpassed by his study & attention all which had Keats profitted by in time, with the assistance of the Italian climate he must have been saved—but before he saw D^r Clark he was in that kind of despair which was ³ based on a real knowledge of

⁴ This postscript is written at the top of the first page.

⁵ Marsh reads, *perhaps correctly*, as.

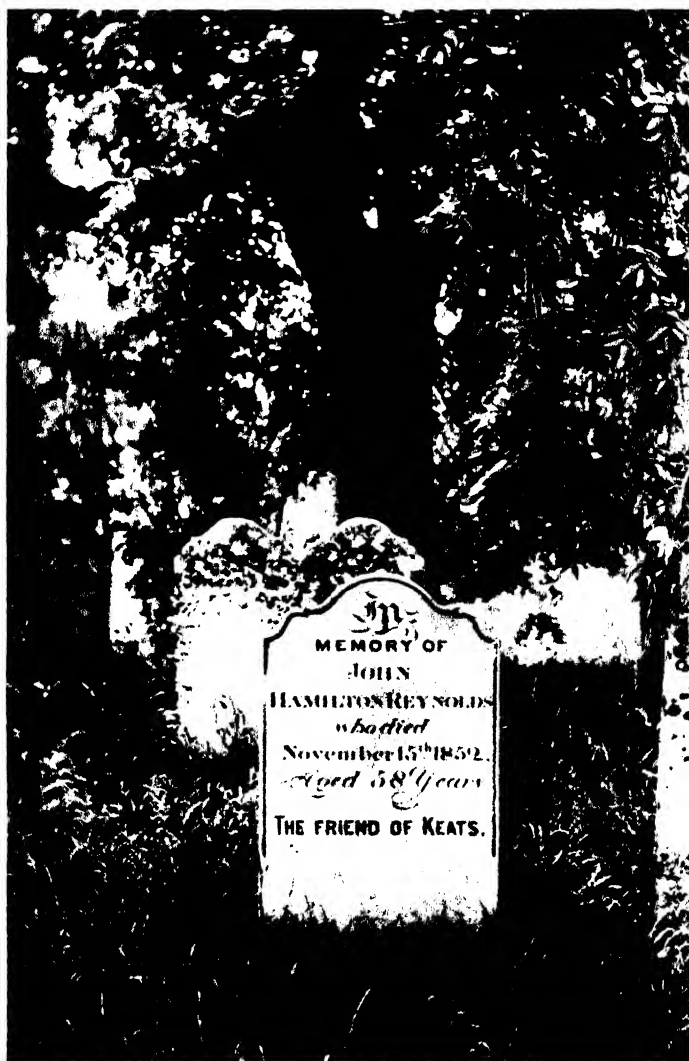
¹ May 5 fell on Friday in 1848.

² Antonio Canova (1757–1822), Marquis of Ischia, the sculptor, and Lawrence (1769–1830), president of the Royal Academy.

³ *Written* despair was was.



JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS



THE GRAVE OF JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS

his own case— With this foreknowledge he baffled all Sir James's skill— Every mor^e when the Doctor entered the <Keats> room Keats would say (looking up with his piercing supernatural eyes, which seemed to encrease in life as his poor body decay'd) "When will this posthumous life of mine finish" for it was in this way that he estimated all Sir James did but I think you will find frequent mention of this excellent doctor in my letters describing Keats last illness

In addition I am glad to say that afterwards I had ample opportunity of confirming my early good impression of Sir James Clark not only in his kind & disinterested attendance on me for he saved my life & made a strong man of me; but also as regards the many poor artists at Rome whom he attended in the same liberal way & w[h]ere his medicine could not remove the malady partly caused by slender means—he has to my knowledge often given pecuniary help— Even now after a quarter of a century I find him the same kind friend & he extends his excellent medical aid to my children with the same liberality

Since I related to you the singular anecdote of Keats & the R. A's dinner it has occurred to me, that I certainly owe the getting the pension at last to Keats energy & affection for not only that I was received kindly by the individual ⁴ in question when {I} came to England; but also the lesson Ke{ats} gave by leaving the table must have been effectual—⁵

I dont know that I ever told you of a singular argument I had with Shelly about the Christian religion in which Keats continually to the annoyance of Shelly declared I had the advantage— I have often thought that it was an interesting example of his generosity and love of justice— Shelly was so piqued not at

⁴ Hilton.

⁵ For the story of the dinner at De Wint's in 1819 and Keats's insulting him and Hilton for not defending Severn's prize-winning picture, "The Cave of Despair," see I, lxxix, Milnes, I, 73, Sharp, pp. 65f., Colvin, p. 380, and Lowell, II, 503.

my argument but at Keats triumphing over him that he declared he would write a pamphlet of his argument— I could easily with a little effort recollect the whole thing⁶ if it would be to your purpose, so pray tell me

Yours very truly Joseph Severn

»» 235 ««

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

22 June 1848¹

Printed by Marsh, pp. 42f.

Newport
I of W.

22 June

My Dear Sir

I send you, at this late hour (but I *fear* they will be *in time!*) the 3 Sonnets.²

I inclose you a letter of remonstrance, (which I found 28 years old! amongst the originals of Keats's Letters) against the printing the marvellous fragment of Hyperion with a work of Leigh Hunt.³ I longed to get him free from being a Political adherent to a good, though then dangerous Side for a young Poet.

The Preface is lost.⁴

⁶ For another version see Sharp, pp. 116f.

¹ The comments on "The Preface" show that this letter was written after No. 231.

² Possibly the Hunt-Shelley-Keats sonnets on the Nile (see II, 182, 354f.) or the three sonnets to Keats in Hunt's *Foliage* (1818), for which see Milnes, I, 99-101, 148f.

³ A detail unmentioned by Colvin, Lowell, and Hewlett.

⁴ See II, 178. Milnes printed it in his 1867 edition, pp. 101-103, from the original manuscript then owned by Moxon and Company. It is now in the Morgan Library, whence Garrod, pp. lxxxviii f., reprinted it.

Do let me hear that the Life is approaching Print-life. I wonder whether the Edingburgh (from which I have been a Stranger for years!) ⁵ or the Quarterly would permit me to carefully—fairly and *cleanly* <to> review this Life & the works of a true, youthful,—persecuted Poet!

I am Dear Sir

Yours faithfully

R. M. Milnes Esq

J. H Reynolds

» 236 «

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE TO R. M. MILNES

7, 12 August 1848

Craven Hill
Cottage,
Bayswater.
Aug 7/48

My dear Sir,

Although I have compassed but a few pages of your life of Keats,¹ (for what delights me, I read <with> at a ploughman's pace:— I chew, and chew; and go back, and ruminate) I cannot delay to send you the assurance that I am enchanted with the way in which you have performed your labour of love.² It is a worthy tribute to his genius:—it is *all* I could have wished for his monumental fame; and—if it be worth your acceptance, I tender you my heart-full gratitude for what you have done for him, whom I honored and loved, with a brotherly love,

⁵ Keats wrote in December, 1818 (*Letters*, p. 248, and compare p. 90), that Reynolds "has become an edinburgh Reviewer."

¹ Milnes's dedication is dated August 1; his book was announced in the *Athenaeum*, August 5, p. 761, as "Just published."

² See II, 151n.

when living; and whose memory I cherish with a feeling that only comes short of idolatry.

He was indeed a noble-hearted being.

With renewed assurances of grateful satisfaction, allow me to subscribe myself, with perfect esteem,

My dear Sir,

Your faithful

and much indebted,

C Cowden Clarke.

Richard Monckton Milnes

Esq^{re} M. P.

&c &c &c

Thanks—thanks too, for your fine back-stroke to the insolent and haughty egoism of Byron.—³

Aug: 12/48

I have kept back my letter till I could speak of the book more to your satisfaction; and I confirm my first impression. The task has been excellently accomplished on your part; and the pleasure I have had in the reading of it would only have been enhanced by an extended contribution of your own admirable opinions and dissertations.

Again, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

and much indebted,

C Cowden Clarke.

³ Milnes, I, 204-208.

» 237 «

THOMAS RESEIGH¹ TO R. M. MILNES

8 August 1848

4 Lombard Street,
8 Aug: 1848.

Sir,

Accept my thanks for the Copy of your " 'Keats' Letters' etc." which I received through M^r Moxon yesterday. It has happened to me to know so many of the Old friends of that fine Genius that he has always been an object of interest with me independently of that which arises from the perusal of his Poems—and I promise myself very much pleasure from the perusal of the Correspondence now printed.—

The possession of a Presentation Copy from the Author is always pleasant, but the present one is doubly so considering how slight my claim is to such a mark of considerate kindness.—
I am Sir

Yours respectfully
T ReseighR. M. Milnes Esq
M. P.

¹ Reseigh, confidential clerk to a London firm of solicitors, did most of the work in raising money for the Thomas Hood Memorial Fund in 1845 (see Walter Jerrold, *Thomas Hood* [1907], pp. 396f.), and hence came in contact with Milnes, a friend and benefactor of the Hoods.

» 238 «

GEORGE WOODHOUSE¹ TO R. M. MILNES

9 August 1848

89 Hamilton Terrace

9 Aug 1848

Dear Sir,

For the Copy of the Life & Letters &c of Keats which you have had the kindness to send me I return you my thanks.

I beg I may be allowed to congratulate you on the close of your 'pious' labors. From the glance I have taken at the Volumes in question I trust they will place the character of the Man in a true light before all who take any interest in his Memory or his Works; in a light in which I doubt whether it is possible for him to have been regarded unless by those who knew him well. That this cannot but be acceptable to that affectionate friend² of his who was content to entrust to you the task, will be a part of the satisfaction which you cannot fail to derive from the Completion of your work.

I remain

yours very faithfully

George Woodhouse

» 239 «

J. H. REYNOLDS TO R. M. MILNES

10 August 1848

Newport

Isle of Wight

10 Aug^t 1848

My Dear Sir

Valuing Keats's Genius and friendship as I did when he

¹ See No. 227.² Brown, who was dead.

lived;—and loving his memory as I do, now that he is lost to me;—I know not how to express my feelings towards you for the earnestness of your Biography—for your high appreciation of his powers;—for your tender unfolding of his character;—and (*indeed* your only knowing him through his great mind seems to me to enrich all that you write of him!) for the boldness and *cleanness* of your defence of him against the drunken brawls of Blackwood, and the wicked savagery of Gifford.¹ I love the 2 Volumes! ² I do not seem (to myself) to have known half the cheerfulness—half the vigour,—half the goodness of the heart & mind of Keats, until I met all his letters & Journals <met> *homed* together, and harmonized as they are now, under your care!—I am grateful that he is getting right out into the sunlight!—

—Not however to appear a Rhapsodist in your eyes,—let me thank you from my heart for *all you have done!* I have a copy of the work in sheets—which I shall have interleaved, & in which I shall correct little errors of the press—put queries as to a statement here & there—jot down suggestions—note circumstances rising out of your Book on to my recollection. &c &c. A second Edition *must* come:—but I think after I have seen you,—I might help you to a little point of interest here & there, which might be of service.

When do you leave Town?—or rather do you at all return to Town, after a change from the “Speaker at Prayers!” in Westminster,—to the “Heart at its breathings” in the country?—Ever my Dear Sir

Your faithful Friend

J. H Reynolds

R. M. Milnes Esq

¹ To whom Reynolds misattributed the attack on *Endymion* in the *Quarterly Review*.

² Harvard owns the copy inscribed “J. H. Reynolds, with the editor's thanks & regards.” Disappointingly enough, it contains almost no comments, none of any importance.

Who will review the Book in the Edinburgh;—I wish, *almost*, that the task were mine!—Perhaps I should have too much feeling in the case to be a Critic:—And yet I should know the goodness and value of the task committed to my judgment & care!—

➡ 240 ◀

G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES

14 August 1848

4 Princes Square,
Kennington,
14th Aug^t 1848.

Dear Sir,

I cannot express how much I am pleased at receiving from you a Copy of the Life and Letters of John Keats. I have looked into it here and there, and I perceive that you have indeed made of it a work most beautiful and interesting. What a halo of loveliness and immortality does it seem to me to shed around your name.

The kind notice you have taken of me,¹ though extremely gratifying, cannot but cover me with shame at my unworthiness of it. My mind, though too delicate and tender to be influenced by the ordinary aims and purposes of life, is withal too feeble for any sustained efforts towards the accomplishment of higher objects. Besides, long since cast down by the gigantic arm of poverty, through the misfortunes of friends in mercantile pursuits: driven out in a small boat fully freighted with all the objects of my love, upon a stormy sea, the feelings and aspira-

¹ Milnes, I, 14f., quoted briefly from an earlier letter from Mathew, whom he described as "a gentleman of high literary merit, now employed in the administration of the Poor Law."

tions of my youth have been swallowed up in one terrific vortex of parental anxiety. I have long been driven out of the paradise of my early fancies and hopes, into the midst of a selfish and conflicting world, to hear the voice of an offended deity denounce against me, 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return again to the ground out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.'²

Deep is my gratitude to you for your kind mention of me to Mr. Buller;³ but it had not the effect which I anticipated: it has not been the means of restoring me to my former position, the position which I had attained when deprived of my appointment, and in which it had become due to my previous services that I should stand. The position which I now occupy is that of a supernumerary at the lowest rate of remuneration; a position not so good as that in which I first entered the public service under Sir Henry Parnell⁴ in 1830.

Cruel to me and to my family is this unhappy destiny. Like Uriah the Hittite I am placed in the full front of the hottest battle, and I must fall.⁵ My position is most perilous on account of its inadequateness to my children's wants. In my former position I should now be receiving £300. a year, which to one of my habits and requirements would be an enviable state of pecuniary felicity; whereas, I now receive less than £150: out of which I have to maintain a family of 14 persons. But those who have come after me have been preferred before

² Genesis 3:19.

³ Mathew asked for the mention (see II, 215). Charles Buller, M. P., was appointed president of the Poor Law Board on December 17, 1847, and died on November 29, 1848. See Sir George Nicholls, *A History of the English Poor Law*, II (1898), 397, 408.

⁴ Parnell (1776-1842), first Baron Congleton, M.P., was chairman of the Committee on the Public Income and Expenditure of the United Kingdom.

⁵ II Samuel 11:15-17.

me: others are now filling the place which I once held: others are eating my children's bread, and enjoying the fruits of my former labours.⁶ Indeed I do not see how I could be restored to my position without a direct application to the Treasury, and that would occasion an enquiry into the cause of my removal, which I fear might reflect dishonor upon some one. My position therefore is difficult, if not hopeless: but the circumstance of my being received again into any position is in my favor, and encourages me to hope that on the occurrence of a favorable opportunity something may yet be done for me. Nevertheless, as poor Hamlet⁷ says '*While the grass grows*' &c. <the proverb is somewhat musty.>

I have heard with pain since my re-engagement in the office, that an individual who had formerly something to do with its arrangements, and who had been the means of introducing several persons to appointments on the commission, was at length convicted of disposing of such appointments for pecuniary considerations. The knowledge of this fact has awakened in my mind a painful suspicion that this individual may have been the means of procuring my removal from the position which I had legitimately obtained by many years of painful service, in order to bring in others who are thus reaping the fruits of my former labours. I am the more induced to entertain this suspicion, as the individual of whom I speak was recommended to the Secretary⁸ by one Dr. Mitchell⁹ with whom while on the Factory Commission¹⁰ I had had a disagreement

⁶ It seems scarcely necessary to point out all Mathew's Biblical allusions, like that to John 1:15, 27, 30.

⁷ III.ii.358f.

⁸ Edwin Chadwick, secretary from 1834 to 1847.

⁹ James Mitchell, LL.D. (died 1844), scientific writer and actuary to the parliamentary commission on factories.

¹⁰ Appointed in April, 1833.

which rendered him hostile to me. So that in the pursuit of his own interest as well as to gratify the enmity of his friend, the individual of whom I speak, may possibly have made such representations as would result in my removal from the Commission. I am further confirmed in such an apprehension, as the Secretary had for some time looked upon me with distrust, and suggested that I might be the author of communications, to the 'Times' Newspaper,¹¹ which he said must have emanated from some one in the office: though I assured him that I would rather resign my appointment, let the consequence be what it might to my family, than be guilty of remaining in my position, and not acting in it with fidelity.

He had known from the beginning, that being opposed politically and morally to the party with whom I had been associated on three former commissions, I had originally given expression to sentiments inimical to the proposed new law, yet being on no commission at the time, but only *promised an appointment if the Bill should pass*, I think it will be seen that the expression of those sentiments at that time, and under those peculiar circumstances, could not redound to my dishonor, and that I could not justly lose the confidence of the Commissioners on that account, considering that on the passing of the Bill I submitted myself to the decision of the legislature, and accepted an appointment under the Commission when I found that the administration of the law had been confided to Gentlemen whom I had no reason not to respect, and in whose eyes I was only solicitous that I might not be associated with that party who held the principles and promulgated the doctrines to which my feelings were so much averse.

The fact was that while on the Factory Commission I had been asked by Dr. Mitchell, how I could be so unscientific as to

¹¹ See II, 202n.

have such a large family: ¹² and I was referred by him to books on the possibility of limiting populousness, and of regulating the number of a family, which he informed me had been gratuitously disseminated amongst the labouring population, by the party with whom I had been associated on these Commissions.¹³ In connexion with this announcement it was also stated that to sympathise with the sufferings, or to relieve the distresses of the poor, was only to encourage and augment the evils from which they suffered: and that the greatest mercy which could be exercised towards them would be to show them no mercy: to teach them that they had no right to expect, and that it would be pernicious for them to receive the sympathy of their fellow men: and if their want of forethought and consideration led them to an undue augmentation of their numbers, they must submit to the consequences as a natural and just retribution; for that their condition could in no other way be ameliorated than by their learning to adjust their numbers to the demand which existed for their labour.

I need not say how different was all this to what I had ever heard or read, or what I had ever felt or imagined. God had made man male and female, and commanded him to increase and multiply, and to replenish the earth.¹⁴ Yet the earth is not yet replenished. God had set before us noble examples of Emigration, and of his abhorrence of all unnatural courses by the severest judgments. God had taught me to bless him for my creation and preservation; and not to look up to my natural

¹² Chadwick had disputed the Malthusian argument that over-population was the cause of poverty and pauperism (see Thomas Mackay, *A History of the English Poor Law*, III [1899], 201, 566f.). He was, however, an ardent disciple of Bentham, in whose house he lived during 1831–1832.

¹³ A number of such works, published in 1832–1834, are listed by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Poor Law History: Part II*, I (1929), 55f., n.

¹⁴ Genesis 1:28.

father as the sole and irresponsible cause of my existence: God had inclined my heart to feel a sympathy for my fellow creatures, and not to look upon my own interests, but upon the interests of all: he had taught me those precepts of faith and hope and charity which it is the glory of a man to follow; and the ruin of a people if they follow not. Am I not to be forgiven then, for writing that pamphlet against the law as originally devised, when I thought that the safety of my country depended on it, and that if I did not write it, God would forsake me, and that my children would be continually vagabonds and beg.

It was my opinion that to discourage marriage, or to discountenance individuals because they had large families, or in any way to attach dishonor to the domestic circle, which is the nursery of all the Virtues was atheistical and immoral, and more than anything calculated to bring about social disorganization; and that the only legitimate means of averting the consequences of a superabundant population was a well organized system of emigration, which would at once be in accordance with the law of God and nature, and if carried out with liberality and boldness, would so effectually relieve the Country of its surplus population, that religion and virtue would have room to flourish, man would not be driven by necessity to prey upon his fellow-man, there would scarcely be a thief or a harlot in our streets, nor occasion for a workhouse or a prison in the whole length and breadth of our land.

I do not know that I can say anything more to kindle your sympathies in my behalf. My children twelve in number are deeply interested in the result. They are Mathew's on both sides, my wife being the daughter of my fathers brother. My cousin Felton also married my sister. He was for many years Crown Surveyor of the Town of Sidney in Australia and was afterwards appointed Surveyor General of New Zealand. My father, Richard Mathew, was a tradesman of good reputation in

the parish of St. Marylebone, where he also held the responsible office of Collector of Kings Taxes till his death. I was brought up in the house of a West India Merchant, where I remained fourteen years, when the house failed. I have since been connected with several Government Commissions, under which I have served during twelve years. It is traditionary in our family that we are a branch of the same house from which the apostle of temperance¹⁵ is descended, and I am sure that I have not dishonored the name nor rendered myself deserving of degradation from the humble position which I occupied, for having given expression to feelings of attachment to the institutions of my country, and of sympathy towards the destitute and friendless.

I have now only to apologize for my unwonted boldness in having solicited your advocacy of my case, which involves circumstances of such peculiar delicacy that I have been compelled to preserve with respect to them an inviolable silence. I have now revealed them to you in the anxious hope, that being fully acquainted with the position in which I stand you may be induced once more to exercise your influence in obtaining for me, if possible, the restitution of my appointment; or if not, at least one more commensurate with the length of my past services, and the present wants of my family: and I am encouraged to solicit this by the retrospect of past happier circumstances, when I was the friend of one in whose life and writings you have taken such a generous and congenial interest.

I am, Dear Sir, Very respectfully, Your obedient Servant,
G. F. Mathew

¹⁵ Theobald Mathew (1790–1856).

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G. F. MATHEW TO R. M. MILNES

15 August 1848

Poor Law Board.
Somerset House.
15 th August. 1848.

Dear Sir.

I regret the necessity which compelled me to trouble you with so long an epistle yesterday. The fact is, my position is so peculiar and so painful, that hitherto I have neither known what to say or what not to say; to whom to speak or with whom to keep silence. Hitherto I have kept silence. Silence is Wisdom: but in communicating with you, while I hope that I may derive good, I am sure that I shall receive no injury.

It would gratify my feelings (if I may so far intrude upon you) if you would have the kindness to send a Copy of your *Life of Keats* to Miss Severn¹ of Bolt Court (Fleet Street) to whom I am indebted for an introduction to Mr. Stephens—and (perhaps) likewise one to Mr. Stephens of 54 Stamford Street, Blackfriars. (He has become a Blue Ink manufacturer.)²

I am, Dear Sir,

Your much obliged
and faithful Servant,
G F Mathew.

¹ See No. 248.

² See II, 206n. Stephens is listed at this address as an "inventor of writing fluids" in the *Post Office London Directory*, 1847, and as a writing-ink manufacturer in Watkins' *London Directory*, 1855.

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FRANCIS JEFFREY, LORD JEFFREY, TO R. M. MILNES

15 August 1848

Two sentences are quoted in *Aldine*, p. xxii.Craigcrook—Edin^bTuesday 15 Aug^t

My Dear M^r Milnes. The very day I received your kind note—and charming little book—(with its too flattering Inscription—)¹ I was sentenced to a rather sharp surgical operation—which was performed next morning, and has confined me ever since to bed—I have really been unable therefore sooner to make my acknowledgments for the great honor you have done me—and the great pleasure I have received from your publication— The perusal of it has soothed me, thro' many uneasy hours—and still continues to cheer my time of convalescence—

There are few names with which I shud so much wish to have my own associated as that of poor Keats.—I never regretted anything more than to have been *too late* with my testimony to his merits: ² and you may therefore judge how gratifying it now

¹ Milnes's volumes were dedicated to Jeffrey.

² In the *Edinburgh Review*, August, 1820 (XXXIV, 203-213). Milnes, I, 200-204, comments on Jeffrey's "lateness." In *Noctes Ambrosianae*, December, 1828 (ed. J. F. Ferrier, II [1855], 144), Christopher North tartly remarked that Jeffrey "praised Keats, it is true, but somewhat tardily, and with no discrimination; and, to this hour, he has taken no notice of his *Lamia and Isabella*, in which Keats's genius is seen to the best advantage; while, from the utter silence observed towards him in general, it is plain enough that he cares nothing for him, and that it is not unjust or unfair to suspect the insertion of the article on *Endymion* was brought about by a Cockney job of Hunt's or Hazlitt's." Reprinting his review in 1844 (*Contributions to the Edinburgh Review*, III, 102-119), Jeffrey observed, "I still think that a poet of great power and promise was lost to us by the premature death of Keats, in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and regret that I did not go more largely into the exposition of his merits." He then made considerable additions.

is to me, to find these names united in your pages, and that tardy vindication recognised, by so high an authority, as having contributed to the *rescue* of his fame—

There are touching indications of true genius, and of its irritable temperament, in the letters you have now published—and precious fragments in the literary remains yet there are traits of moodiness that are somewhat painful—and the unbroken gloom of the closing scene is oppressive—The tragedy³ is a great failure—and makes one wonder that the author shud ever have imagined that it was part of his mission to effect a complete revolution in the dramatic literature of his age!—There are brilliant images—and words of power—scattered thro it, no doubt—but the puerile extra[va]gance and absolute bombast of most of the passionate speeches—(Ludolph's especially)—appear to me more humiliating, than even the palpable and almost inconceivable weakness and absurdity of the dramatic conception—

There are beautiful passages and lines of ineffable sweetness in the minor pieces—and strange outbreaks of redundant fancy, and felicitous expression in the Cap and Bells—tho the general extravagance of the fiction is more suited to an Italian than an English taste—The prologue to the Eve of St Mark seems to me the most faultless of these relics—and likely, if finished, to have grown into something even more exquisite than the Eve of St Agnes— But I will not be tempted to take another sheet, and must therefore betake myself to the margin, again to offer you my most cordial thanks for the high gratification you have afforded me—and to subscribe myself

Your obliged and very faithful F Jeffrey

³ *Otho the Great.*

» 243 «

C. W. DILKE TO R. M. MILNES

About 15 August 1848

Low^r Grosvenor Place—Mon^r

Dear Sir

I found your interesting volumes waiting my return from a few days sea-side idling—and ran through them with eagerness & pleasure.

Of course to one who knew Keats personally they want something of the vividness of life—but you have done your spiriting kindly,¹ and I hope all his friends will be satisfied.

Occasional slips have fortunately no ill consequence—thus Bailey whom you quietly in-urn abt 1821, is yet living ‘a prosperous gentleman’ and Senior Chaplain at Ceylon.^{1a}

One error I fear has had its misleading influence—John was older & not younger than George—he was the eldest of the family. I will not bore you with a Comment on Brown’s delusion as shadowed forth in the 2nd volume—I am sure you meant to be not only just but kind. But poor George is, it appears, dead, and I am only the more anxious that the truth & the truth only should be told of him. You must equally desire it—and therefore, on the chance of a second edition, I will express a wish that you would, some leisure morning, put down in black & white, John’s known & unavoidable expenditure, & then tell me what was the *possible* ‘remainder’ in Dec^r 1819 or Jan^r 1820 from which George *could* have taken any thing. I waive all the advantage that might be taken of your considerate suggestions abt carelessness in money matters²—Keats was neither careless

¹ Compare *The Tempest*, I.ii.298.

^{1a} See II, 261, 313. The quotation is from *Macbeth*, I.iii.73.

² See Milnes, II, 40-42.

nor careful but habitually *inexpensive*. Remember that *John* came of age in October 1816— Do his letters to Taylor abt 'duns' & borrowings in May & July 1817³ give hopes of a remainder in 1819, 20? I have too something to say about the division of Tom's property—but this sort of questioning on paper, would be wearisome & endless. Whenever therefore you are inclined for a talk on the subject I am at your command—

The volumes intended for M^{rs} Llanos I have no means of forwarding to her. Her last letter, the *third* of enquiry after *George* & his family, I received only *six weeks* since! It was dated Valladolid & there, I suppose, she is residing for the present. I was so ignorant of the authority on which *George's* death was reported, that heretofore I evaded the subject.

I am Dear Sir

Y^{rs} very truly

C W Dilke

»» 244 ««

WILLIAM HASLAM TO R. M. MILNES⁴

19 August 1848

Copthall Court

19th August 1848

My dear Sir,

I cannot write to you as I ought to do.—Words, at least my words, are all too poor to thank you, and to express to you my sense of the honour you have done yourself by the justice you have <done> rendered to my noble Friend John Keats.—

I have not read through both Volumes yet.—First I have been on one, then the other—often on both at the same sitting

³ See Milnes I, 47-49.

⁴ An incomplete draft. See No. 247 for the letter finally sent.

—and more than once have I put both away.— It <is a> has been a clean taking me back to a separte state of existence that I had more than thirty years ago a state that has long appeared to me almost as a dream.—The realities of life have intervened but God be praised <though> they have but <in a manner> been laid upon the surface—have but hidden, not effaced those happy happy days.—

Poor Keats.—Wou'd that you or the like of you had thirty years ago been near hand to sustain & cheer him <that noble nature>—that I had had your powers & station or you my opportunities.—But as you say—thirty years ago the world thought not for itself as now it does.—Party was everything.—Keats, as has been said of others stood on the shoulders of the age—What <Keats> young as he was, he felt, and feeling cou'd not but give forth— What the Sycophants of that day crushed him for giving utterance to has since become accepted truth to tens of thousands.—There are who lord it o'er their fellow men—with most prevailing tinsel—⁵ <is> Well do I remember

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JOSEPH BOSWORTH⁶ TO R. M. MILNES

21 August 1848

9 Southampton St.
Bloomsbury, August 21st.
1848.

Dear Sir,

Allow me to thank you most heartily for the life of Keats.

⁵ *Endymion*, III.1f.

⁶ Philologist (1789–1876), who published his dictionary as well as a new edition of his *Origin of English* in 1848.

It does honour to your talents, taste & good feeling. I know that my dull & prosy books are hardly worth your acceptance; but, if they serve no other purpose, my begging your acceptance of a copy of my "Origin of English &c. & my "Compendious Anglo-Saxon Dictionary," will be some evidence, of the great respect with which I am your's very faithfully

Jos^h Bosworth.

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ROBERT BLACKWOOD TO R. M. MILNES

22 August 1848

Edinburgh 22 August
1848

Dear sir

I beg to acknowledge the receipt for the Magazine of a copy of *The Life of M^r John Keats*

At page 193 of the first Volume you state that Mess^{rs} Blackwood had forwarded an invitation to M^r Keats to visit Edinburgh—on the conclusion you draw from its non acceptance I make no comment.¹

My object in now writing being simply to ascertain your authority for stating that such an invitation had been made by

¹ Milnes remarked that Keats's rejection of the invitation "may not have been unconnected with the article on him which appeared in the August [1818] number of the 'Edinburgh Magazine.'" In his 1867 edition, p. 164n., he says that he followed Brown on this matter (see II, 64) but that Robert Blackwood believes Brown to have been "mistaken or misinformed." He then adds that in July, 1818, Bailey talked with "a leading contributor" (Lockhart) to *Blackwood's* about Keats, and "Bailey thought his confidence had been abused." See No. 119 and II, 286. Margaret O. W. Oliphant, *Annals of a Publishing House* (1897), gives much information about Robert Blackwood, the publisher's second son, who died in 1852.

my late Father the only M^r Blackwood ² at the period you allude to and I will feel greatly obliged by an early reply

I am Sir

for Self & Brother

Y^r Most Obed Ser^t

Robt. Blackwood.

R M Milnes Esq^r

M.P.

➡ 247 ⬅

WILLIAM HASLAM ³ TO R. M. MILNES

23 August 1848

23rd Aug^t 1848 ⁴

R M Milnes Esq^{re}

My dear Sir

I cou'd not reconcile it to myself on receipt of your Memoirs of my noble minded Friend Keats, to simply thank you, and say I was much gratified to find you had at length given them to the world;—& having deferred till I cou'd have <had> opportunities of reading them, and of thanking you & of expressing my high sense of the honour you had done yourself, & <of> the lasting comfort you have given me— I find the attempt to acquit myself as I ought to do, is altogether (at least for the present) too much for me

I have not yet read through both volumes I have read first <one> part of one then part of <another> the other— then of the first again—often of both at the same sitting—& more than once have put both away

It has been a clean taking me back to a seperate state of

² See No. 61.

³ Compare No. 244.

⁴ Preceded by an undecipherable three-word address (*not* Cophthall Court).

existence—that I really had thirty years ago but which has since appeared to me almost as a dream

I hope shortly to have a quiet week or two in the Country— Deeply your Debtor

I remain my dear Sir

Yours with sincere respect

W H

The orig^l Letters of Severn reached me safely

»» 248 ««

EMMA SEVERN ¹ TO R. M. MILNES

About 25 August 1848

3 Bolt Court, Fleet Street.²

Dear Sir,

I had much pleasure in receiving a Copy of the most interesting book I have read for some time, & I very gratefully offer you most humble and hearty thanks for this your noble tribute to the memory of ³ John Keats the emanation of divinity—, the meteor of his age!—

I have read this “gorgeous tragedy” ⁴ which depicts the struggles and triumphs of that splendid young life with grief and joy and tears. You my dear Sir have “found your work” and proved it to be “worship” ⁵ of the most sublime solemnity. None other than a master’s hand was worthy to touch the silent lyre that trembled over the poet’s grave. I thank you, as every feeling

¹ Author of *Anne Hathaway: or, Shakspeare in Love*, 3 vols. (1845). See II, 247.

² The *Post Office London Directory*, 1847, gives 3 Bolt Court as the address of the Medical Society of London.

³ Written of of.

⁴ Milton, “Il Penseroso,” line 97.

⁵ Possibly a reference to *Paradise Lost*, XII.119, “worship their own work in wood and stone.”

mind will thank you for redeeming Keats from the miserable scandal of having sunk to that grave because a Reviewer was either very stupid, or extr[a] stout in malevolence; I honestly congratulate you on possessing the genuine appreciation, and true feeling which led you to undertake a task of such extreme delicacy and importance, and equally so, on the manly spirit and sound judgment with which you have brought the work to complete perfection.

My dear Brother the late Dr Charles Severn⁶ knew and loved John Keats very intimately, they were both young and fellow students at Guy's and St Thomas's Hospitals. I am about leaving England for Australia; but should any relics of the poet be ever found among our papers, my Sister will forward them to you with much pleasure. My own search has been unavailing, hitherto

I am Sir,

With sentiments of great Regard,

Yours Truly

Emma Severn

Richard Monckton Milnes Esq^o

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EDWARD HOLMES⁷ TO R. M. MILNES

29 August 1848

7 Russell Grove, Vassal Road
North Brixton Aug 29. 1848

Dear Sir

I beg to thank you for the copy of Keats's life & letters

⁶ Author of *First Lines of the Practice of Midwifery* (1831) and editor of the *Diary* of John Ward of Stratford (1839). He is ignored by Keats's biographers.

⁷ See Nos. 198 and 201.

which you have been so good as to send me; & am not able to tell you with what pleasure I have read the letters & poems. The work is certainly one of the most curious in English literature.

All that was delicate & difficult to deal with in this biography seems to have been touched with great judgment & a discriminating hand.

I am dear Sir

Your faithful Servant

Edw^d Holmes

Richard Monckton Milnes Esq.

&c &c

»» 250 ««

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR¹ TO R. M. MILNES

29 August 1848

Colvin, p. 538, prints most of the first paragraph.

Bath Aug. 29

Dear Milnes,

On my return to Bath last evening, after ten weeks absence, I find your valuable present of Keateses Works. He better deserves such an editor than I such a mark of your kindness. Of all our poets, excepting Shakspeare and Milton, and perhaps Chaucer, he has most of the poetical character—fire, fancy, and diversity. He has not indeed overcome so great a difficulty as Shelley in his *Cenci*, nor united so many powers of the mind as Southey in *Kehama*—but there is an effluence of power and light pervading all his works, and a freshness such as we feel in the glorious dawn of Chaucer.

¹ This famous author (1775–1864) has many complimentary remarks on Keats. See, for example, his *Complete Works*, ed. T. E. Welby and Stephen Wheeler (16 vols., 1927–1936), III, 78, 140; V, 307; IX, 121; XV, 140, 168; XVI, 221.

Let me now congratulate you on your temporary escape from the faineants of our reformed House of Commons.² A pretty set of fools and scoundrels it contains, wth perhaps half a dozen exceptions. The other day I visited the only public man of whose abilities and integrity I entertain a high opinion—Sir W. Molesworth.³ He is the only man fit to conduct the affairs of England—Lord Clarendon⁴ those of Ireland. What a virtuous set of simpletons must our Saxon forefathers have been, who devised a trial by jury! A trial by the hot ploughshare was less absurd. I said so forty years ago,⁵ and was called a republican with a tyrant's heart. But in what country, in what age of the world, were twelve honest men brought together? In Ireland are there, or ever were there,—seven? If Cromwell [?] had lived a few years longer, he would have brought about a true and lasting Union. Our poor devils can no more do it than a rat can coil the cable of a seventyfour.

Sad work! to sink from poetry into politics. I draw my foot out of the mire, and heartily thank you for your present and for your patience.

W S Landor

² Milnes was in Paris (Reid, I, 404).

³ Politician (1810–1855). Landor published a poem in his honor in the *Examiner*, January 29, 1853. See Millicent Fawcett's *Life of the Right Hon. Sir William Molesworth, Bart.* (1901).

⁴ George W. F. Villiers (1800–1870), fourth Earl of Clarendon, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1847–1852).

⁵ Perhaps in 1814 during the lawsuits arising from his troubles at Llanthony. See Malcolm Elwin, *Savage Landor* (1941), pp. 158–167.

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BENJAMIN BAILEY¹ TO R. M. MILNES

15, 16 October 1848

Colombo, Ceylon. October 15. 1848.

My dear Sir—

You will perhaps be surprised at so familiar an address from an utter stranger in one sense, though not in another. But I cannot address one by a colder and more distant title, though we be *personally* strangers, who has done such justice to the genius and character, the *manliness*, and *morale*, of a man whom living I loved, and whose memory I cherish with no ordinary feeling to the present hour.—I am that “Mr Bailey,” of whom at p. 62. of your first Volume, you say “Brothers they were in affection and in thought—brothers also in *destiny*. *Mr Bailey died soon after Keats*.” My “destiny” had indeed led me out of the circle of my former friends; happy, in my estimate of early death, had it been as you state. For I have much faith in the touching lines of our great poet of the Lakes, and now of the *laurel*:—

“The good die first;

And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust,

Burn to the socket.”²

Keats was eminently the exemplification of this sentiment; as Wordsworth is of the contrary one of the Scriptural blessedness

¹ Bailey’s hand is exceptionally villainous in this letter. Milnes wrote to Mrs. Charles J. MacCarthy, of Ceylon, on December 4 (Reid, I, 409): “By the same post as yours came a long interesting letter about Keats from Archdeacon Bailey. I know people cannot always be judged of by their letters . . . , but he ought to be a good, genial man, with interest in books and art.”

² *The Excursion*, I.500-502.

of (in his own language) "a beautiful old age."³ Wordsworth has lived to see the bright orb of his fame rise triumphantly above the attacks of party-men, and the sneers of the ignorant and vulgar. When I was a young man, for some years after, as well as before my intimacy with poor Keats, the name of Wordsworth was a jest, and the "Idiot-Boy" was coupled in association with his honoured name.—You, my dear Sir, have contributed, I am sure, most effectively to the due appreciation of John Keats as a *man* as well as a *poet*. Nor, perhaps, could⁴ I go the whole length with you in your preface, if it *be* your meaning that the *man* can be separated from his *works*. But I have always felt the force of what I read first nearly 40 years ago, which Milton says in his noble prose work, that a good man should be a *good poem*⁵—that is, that a high order of genius must coexist with a high order of virtue.

The errors of Keats's character,—and they were as transparent as a weed in a pure and lucent stream of water,—resulted from his education; rather from his *want* of education. But like the Thames waters, when taken out to sea, he had the rare quality of purifying himself; and nothing is more true than what you say in your preface, of the growing nature and presage [?] of his genius and taste. It was the same in the man. I had the advantage of being somewhat his senior in years, as that I had providentially more reading and more education; while, though I had mixed with the world some⁶ time, I had not been, as he must have been, thrown so much (yet I had been very much) upon myself in unequal and inferior society on the one hand,—and among persons,—at his then very critical time,—

³ "To —, in Her Seventieth Year," begins, "Such age how beautiful."

⁴ Or possibly need.

⁵ "He who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well . . . ought himself to be a true poem."—*Apology for Smectymnuus*, 1642 (*Student's Milton*, ed. F. A. Patterson [1930], p. 549).

⁶ Or perhaps at some.

who had distinguished themselves by peculiar sentiments which were not only injurious in themselves, but highly so to such an untrained and unfortified mind as Keats's. Of all this no man was more perfectly aware and on his guard than was Keats. On *religion*, for instance, he had (as some of his letters to myself in your book shew, the most lax notions. But he was never a scoffer; he was guiltless of irreverence; and I remember that he promised me to be on his guard in these respects.

Tardy, but ample justice has been now done him; and I perfectly concur in the decision you have come to, in his case, of publishing his correspondence in the form you have. His *manliness* was a principal feature of his character. His integrity and good sense were not inferior. Socially, he was the most *loveable* creature, in the proper sense of that word as distinguished from *amiable*, I think I ever knew as a man. And he had abundantly more of the *poetical character*, a hundred times told, than I ever knew in any individual.

My surprise was very great when a few evenings since, Sir J. Emerson Tennent, whom I dare say you know, our Colonial Secret^r, gave me two numbers he had just rec^d of my old friend Dilke's Athenæum (which I take in monthly parts) containing a notice, or rather *two* notices,⁷ of your book, in which I found, rather to my amusement, *you* had *killed* me, but the writer, Dilke I apprehend, had brought me to life again. I had forgotten, in the sorrows and trials of nearly 30 years, that I had given up Keats's letters. But when I got your book, which had come to our public Library, I then remembered,—*re*-collected rather—that, when I was once in London, not very long after poor Keats's death, our friend Taylor (for he was always the united friend & publisher) talked of compiling the Biography, and requested such letters as I could spare for that purpose.⁸ I have

⁷ August 12 and 19, 1848, pp. 789-791, 824-827.

⁸ See Nos. 115, 118, 119.

gone through much of deep sorrow & trial, and have lived in Scotland, France, and finally here, whither I came on the Bishop of London's⁹ very kind recommendation 17 years ago, and almost immediately after my landing here lost a beloved wife (the sister of Mr Gleig the Principal Chaplain <often [?]> mentioned by name sometimes in Keats's letters & now well known in the Colony world) and it is not surprising that I should have mentally lost sight of, rather than have forgotten this circumstance. I had, however, retained two letters (one of which I inclose you) which I had placed in a book of autographs I collected and bound up a few years ago. On reading your preface, having first glanced at and recognized many of my letters, all this flashed upon me. I suppose Taylor handed them over to Brown, who gave them into your keeping. And perhaps under the circumstances it is as well that all the materials have fallen into the hands of one, who cannot be suspected of any bias, and who has executed his task so well.—

You are perfectly at liberty to insert the inclosed letter in a future edition,¹⁰ and make what use you please of it. He concluded, and wrote the larger part, I think the whole of the third book, in his month's visit to me at Oxford, and therefore sent me the opening of the 4th. I will (in a future paper I meditate drawing up for you) tell you of his mode of composition. As to the date of this letter I am not quite certain (for he seldom dated his letters) but from the fact of the quotation, having already finished the 3^d book as I have stated, & you likewise state in the introduction to the first letter to me of the 8th Oct., I think it should follow that letter; and stating from *whom* it came, you may make it an appropriate substitute for the 3 lines

⁹ Charles James Blomfield (1786–1857).

¹⁰ Milnes, 1867, pp. 55–58, printed it in part. See *Letters*, pp. 54–57, for the entire letter.

in which you make my exit.¹¹ I should like to know whence you derived that *mis*-information. I am about to leave Colombo for a considerable time, but not Ceylon. I require *rest*, rather than any violent change of Climate like England, to recover [from] the effects of severe illness all last year, and serious attacks for the last 4 years. My two surviving children, a son and a daughter, whom I sent home for education, have returned to me. My son, a graduate of Oxford,¹² is now in the civil service of Ceylon, as likewise my son in law Mr Mitford. I am going to live with my daughter and my *grandchildren*: and Mr Mitford's station is under the shadow of the far-famed *Adam's Peak* (upon whose summit I spent half a day and a night 13 years ago)—a country in which poor Keats would have gloried.

While I am in my retirement there, and indeed very soon after I go thither, I meditate drawing up a paper for your *information*, and if needful for your *use* in a future edition, upon poor Keats: and I will borrow my daughter's hand to copy my *Kaligraphy*, to which, among my "good works," I see you have given your *imprimatur*, on the authority of poor Keats, 30 years ago.¹³ It required not that attestation of its badness: and I fear that "years which bring the philosophic mind" ¹⁴ will not have mended my handwriting. I can add not much, if anything, to your facts, but to the *verification* of some of them. Keats staid a whole month, or more with me, at Oxford during the long vacation of 1817 when I staid up to read; and both of us having what the French happily call the *besoin de parler*, at that age, I knew his *inner* man so thoroughly that I may be able to throw

¹¹ See Milnes, 1867, p. 45. ¹² Bailey's will calls him John, of Trinity College; but the only Oxford graduate named Bailey who was the son of a Benjamin Bailey listed in Joseph Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* (I [1887], 47) is Joseph, son of Benjamin Bailey, of Arbroath, Scotland.

¹³ See Milnes, I, 69 (*Letters*, p. 64).

¹⁴ Wordsworth, "Intimations of Immortality," line 187.

light upon his genius and character, which can be thrown only by the hand which has grasped his hand as mine has done, while the dew and freshness of youthful trustfulness was upon each of us. I now stand in the shadow and upon the threshold of old age; and a great portion of my best life has waned away, like a candle in a cave, out of the reach of things and thoughts which your book, my dear sir, has flashed upon me.

While I was writing this letter early yesterday morning (to pass on Westward [?] which I may today) I received a note from a friend regarding yourself. I find you are member for *Pontefract* where I have a nephew, John Bailey Girdlestone, a solicitor; and though I have not known him since he was a child, I have no doubt that "Altho' a *lawyer*, he's an honest man."

You have one member in your house, Mr Tuffnell¹⁵ (a liberal I suspect like yourself) a most amiable man, and "a ripe Scholar."¹⁶ He knows me. And did¹⁷ you know a friend of mine, and of Mr *Landor's*, Mr *Kenyon*?¹⁸ Though a Churchman of the old school, most of my dearest friends in life have been *Whigs* and *liberals*. Kenyon is such. Keats eminently so. And my dear old friend, the only *literary* man I have known here, and a dear old man with whom I was very intimate, the late Sir W^m Rough better known as *Serj' Rough*,¹⁹ was one of the old Whigs. He was a great friend of James Beatties,²⁰ and himself no mean poet. So I hope you will not put me down as one of the bigotted Parsons, though loving the Church and old *Tory* politics as much as most of my order; but thanking you

¹⁵ Henry Tuffnell, 13 Cavendish Square, elected from Devonport.

¹⁶ *Henry VIII*, IV.ii.51.

¹⁷ Or *perhaps* do.

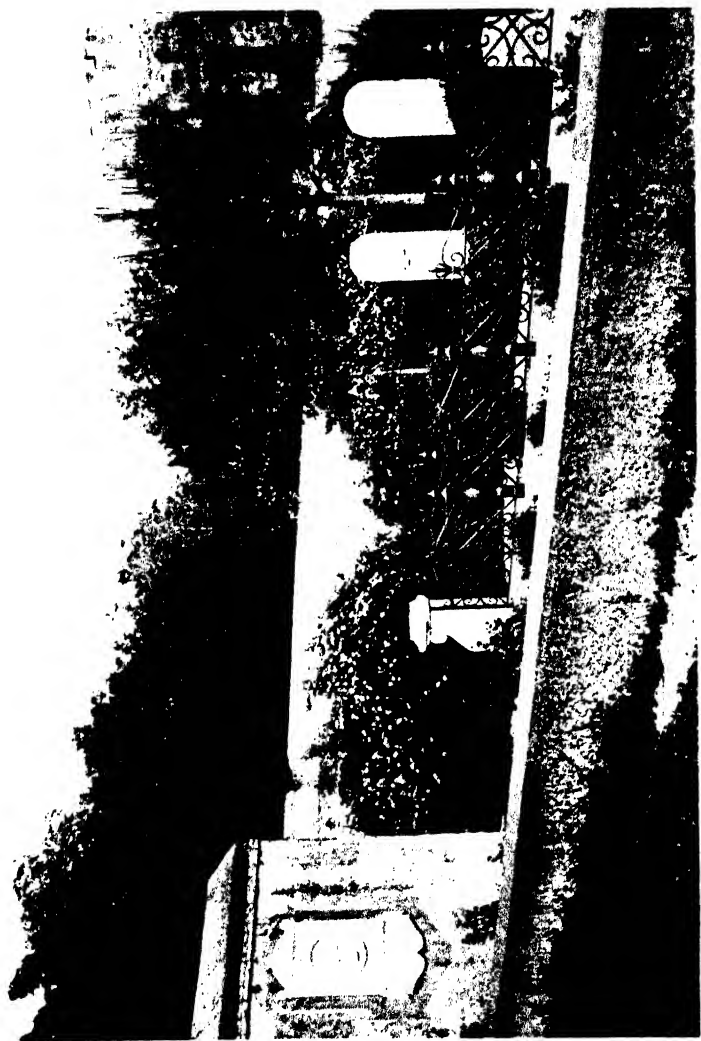
¹⁸ John Kenyon (1784-1856), poet and philanthropist.

¹⁹ Rough (died 1838) was chief justice of the supreme court, Ceylon, and author of *Poems, Miscellaneous and Fugitive* (1819). See II, 310.

²⁰ Scottish poet (1735-1803).



DETAIL: PROFANE LOVE. FROM TITIAN'S
"SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE"
(See Volume II, page 130)



THE GRAVES OF JOHN KEATS AND JOSEPH SEVERN

most heartily for the justice you have done my beloved friend John Keats, who, as I told [?] Tennent,²¹ was *scorned*, in his life, equally by the Aristocracy of rank and mere talent,—(for men of *genius* all valued him),——

Believe me, my dear sir, with great respect and regard,
Most Cordially Yours,

Oct 16. 1848

B Bailey

P. S. There is another person in Ceylon, neither of “*kin or kind*” to me, yclept *Rev. B. Bailey*, though not of my ugly *Jewish* name. Be so good therefore as, when you write to me, which I assure myself you will, address me as

Archdeacon Bailey, Colombo, Ceylon,

whence letters will be forwarded to me, wherever²² I may be.—

P. S. I was sure you were a POET. My friend sent me a beautiful rendering from the Persian— “Four things Oh God &c.”²³ It seems *Christian* rather than Persian.

»» 252 ««

F. E. VENABLES¹ TO R. M. MILNES

18 December 1848

Woburn,

Beaconsfield

18th Decr. 1848

Sir

In common with a multitude of admirers of the Genius

²¹ See II, 308n.

²² Or *perhaps* wheresoever.

²³ Apparently not by Milnes himself. Bailey had read only his *Palm Leaves* (see II, 312).

¹ Not identified.

of Keats, I cannot but be grateful to you for the treat you have given such, in your "Life & Letters" of that gifted Poet: & I am emboldned to trespass upon your kindness so far as to ask for an explanation of one line in the exquisite little song, which you have selected as an autograph Frontispiece to the 2nd Vol:

"See me, 'tis this silvery Bill

"Ever cures the good man's ill—" ²

I have no manner of right to take this liberty, but I depend on your goodness at least to burn this & forgive my impertinence, or if you kindly send me a reply, I shall esteem it a great favor.

I am, with much respect,

Your obed^t humble Serv^t

Francis Edw^d Venables.

R. Monckton Milnes Esq.

&c &c &c

»» 253 ««

BENJAMIN BAILEY TO R. M. MILNES ¹

7 May 1849

Various sentences, some of them highly condensed, are quoted by Milnes, 1867, p. 46, and long (inexact) extracts by Colvin, pp. 143-147, and Finney, I, 10f., 149, 220f., 223-226, 310, II, 435f., 495.

Ratnapoora. Island of Ceylon

May 7 . . 1849.

My dear Sir

I have too long delayed the fulfilment of my promise ² of drawing up a paper of Reminiscences of my dear & lamented Friend John Keats, to whose memory & genius you have done

² From "Fairy's Song" ("Shed no tear"), lines 13f.

¹ Written by Bailey's daughter, Janet (Mrs. Edward L. Mitford), with some revisions in his own hand. This letter was forwarded with No. 254.

³ See II, 262.

most ample justice in your very valuable & interesting work of his "Life, Letters, and Literary Remains."

I shall not trouble you with any reasons why I have been thus dilatory. It has been from no disinclination, or indifference; but if you had lived in the Tropics as long as I have—not to mention my time of life—you would understand more experimentally the dishonest propensities of that proverbial "Procrastination," who is "the thief of Time . ." ³

It was my first intention to draw up a more formal Paper, entitled "Reminiscences." But on consideration, I have thought it best to tell you what I have to say in the form of a letter. It sets us both more at an ease. You can select what you please for use, & put it in whatever shape may be most agreeable, or suitable to your purpose.

I have not very much to tell you that is new: & yet my remarks may extend to an inconvenient length for any other purpose than for extracts, or as subject of thought, & *matériel* for amending or adjusting the materials you have already been possessed of.

It was, I think, about the end of 1816, or the beginning of 1817, that my friend, M^r Reynolds, wrote to me at Oxford respecting Keats, with whom he & his family had just become acquainted. He conveyed to me the same impressions, which the poet made upon the minds of almost all persons who had the happiness of knowing him, & subsequently upon myself. Early in 1817 his first volume of Poems was published by Ollier, which was sent to me. I required no more to satisfy me that he was indeed a Poet of rare and original genius.

On my first visit to London, I believe, after the publication of this Volume—at least not long after—I was introduced to him. I was delighted with the naturalness & simplicity of his

³ *Sic.* Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 1 (*Poetical Works*, Aldine ed., I, 13).

character, & was at once drawn to him by his winning & indeed affectionate manner towards those with whom he was himself pleased. Nor was his personal appearance the least charm of a first acquaintance with the young Poet. He bore, along with the strong impress of genius, much beauty of feature & countenance. The Lady's sketch ⁴ (Life Vol 1. p. 103) comes very near to my own recollection. The contour of his face was, as she describes it, not square & angular, but circular & oval; & this is the proper shape of a poet's head. Boccaccio's & Spenser's faces & heads are so formed. It is in the character of the countenance what Coleridge would call *feminineity* ⁵ (see his Table Talk) which he thought to be a mental constituent of true genius.* His hair was beautiful—a fine brown, rather than auburn, I think; & if you placed your hand upon his head, the silken curls felt like the rich plumage of a bird. I do not particularly remember the thickness of the upper lip, which is so generally discribed, & doubtless correctly;—but the mouth struck me as too wide, both in itself, & as out of harmony with the rest of the face, which, with this single blemish, was eminently beautiful. The eye was full & fine, & softened into tenderness, or beamed with a fiery brightness, according to the current of

* I cannot hit upon the passage referred to, somewhere in Coleridge's Table Talk. But here is a yet more apposite passage in the same work Vol 2 p. 26. 1st Edition.

"X——'s face is almost the only exception I know to the observation, that something feminine—not *effeminate*, mind—is discoverable in the countenances of all men of Genius. Look at that face of old Dampier, a rough sailor, but a man of exquisite mind. How soft is the air of his countenance, how delicate the shape of his temples!"—

⁴ See No. 192.

⁵ NED cites Coleridge, 1820 (*Letters, Conversations, and Recollections*, I [1836], 72n., II, 228), as the first of two users of this word.

his thoughts & conversation. Indeed the form of his head was like that of a fine Greek statue:—& he realized to my mind the youthful Apollo, more than any head of a living man whom I have known. Mr Severn's portrait,⁶ admirable as it is, does not convey to my mind & memory the peculiar sweetness of expression of John Keats during the,—alas!—short period of my personal intercourse with him. It has the character of more matured thought, with an expression, to me almost painful, of suffering. I know not at what time this likeness was taken: but I should suppose it at least a year or two later than 1817; & a year or two wrought wonders in Keat's mind, & most probably & naturally in the expression of his most expressive features.

At the commencement of the long Vacation I was again in London, on my way to another part of the country: & it was my intention to return to Oxford early in the Vacation for the purpose of reading. I saw much of Keats. And I invited him to return with me to Oxford, & spend as much time as he could afford with me in the silence & solitude of that beautiful place during the absence of the numerous members & students of the University. He accepted my offer, & we returned together—I think in August 1817. It was during this visit, & in my room, that he wrote the third book of *Endymion*.

I think he had written the few first introductory lines which he read to me, before he became my guest. I did not then, & I cannot now very much approve that introduction. The "baaing vanities"⁷ have something of the character of what was called "the cockney school." Nor do I like many of the forced rhymes, & the apparent effort, by breaking up the lines, to get as far as possible in the opposite direction of the Pope school. But having said this—which was my impression at the time of the composi-

⁶ The miniature portrait, now in the National Portrait Gallery, reproduced as the frontispiece by Milnes, vol. I (see Williamson, pp. 99-102).

⁷ *Endymion*, III.3.

tion of this Book, & so remains now—I must repeat at this distance of time, what I always felt & then expressed, that the Poem throughout is full of beauty, both of thought & diction, & rich beyond any poem of the same length in the English language, in the exuberance, even to overflowing, of a fine <imagery> imagination.

His mode of composition of the third Book, of which I was a witness, is best described by recounting our habits of study for one day during the month he visited me at Oxford. He wrote, & I read, sometimes at the same table, & sometimes at separate desks or tables, from breakfast to the time of our going out for exercise,—generally two or three o'clock. He sat down to his task,—which was about 50 lines a day,—with his paper before him, & wrote with as much regularity, & apparently with as much ease, as he wrote his letters. Indeed he quite acted up to the principle he lays down in the letter of axioms to his publisher, (my old & valued friend M^r Taylor) on which you justly set the seal of your approbation— “That if poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves of a tree, it had better not come at all.”⁸ This axiom he fulfilled to the letter by his own practice, *me teste*, while he composed the third Book of *Endymion*, in the same room in which I studied daily, until he completed it. Sometimes he fell short of his allotted task,—but not often: & he would make it up another day. But he never forced himself. When he had finished his writing for the day, he usually read it over to me; & he read or wrote letters until we went out for a walk. This was our habit day by day. The rough manuscript was written off daily, & with few erasures.

I remember very distinctly, though at this distance of time, his reading of a few passages; & I almost think I hear his voice, & see his countenance. Most vivid is my recollection of

⁸ See Milnes, I, 108, and *Letters*, p. 108, both of whom read “leaves to a tree.”

the following passage of the fine & affecting story of the old man, Glaucus, which he read to me immediately after its composition:—

“The old man raised his hoary head & saw
 The wildered stranger—seeming not to see,
 The features were so lifeless. Suddenly
 He woke as from a trance; his snow white brows
 Went arching up, & *like two magic ploughs*
Furrowed deep wrinkles in his forehead large,
Which kept as fixedly as rocky marge,
*Till round his withered lips had gone a smile.”*⁹

The lines I have italicised, are those which then forcibly struck me as peculiarly fine, & to my memory have “kept as fixedly as rocky marge.” I remember his upward look when he read of the “magic ploughs,” which in his hands have turned up so much of the rich soil of Fairyland. When we had finished our studies for the day we took our walk, & sometimes boated on the Isis, as he describes these little excursions very graphically in a letter from Oxford to Mr Reynolds.¹⁰ And once we took a longer excursion of a day or two, to Stratford upon Avon, to visit the birthplace of Shakespeare. We went of course to the house visited by so many thousands of all nations of Europe, & inscribed our names in addition to the “numbers numberless”¹¹ of those which literally blackened the walls: and if those walls have not been washed, or our names wiped out to find place for some others, they will still remain together upon that truly honored wall of a small low attic apartment. We also visited the

⁹ *Endymion*, III.218-225.

¹⁰ See Milnes, I, 55, and *Letters*, p. 45.

¹¹ Hazlitt (*Complete Works*, ed. P. P. Howe, VIII [1931], 16, 209) uses this phrase twice.

church, & were pestered with a common place showman of the place. He was struck, I remember, with the simple statue there, which, though rudely executed, we agreed was most probably the best likeness of the many extant, but none very authentic, of the myriad-minded Shakspeare.¹²—His enjoyment was of that genuine, quiet kind which was a part of his gentle nature; deeply feeling what he truly enjoyed, but saying little. On our return to Oxford we renewed our quiet mode of life, until he finished the third Book of Endymion, & the time came that we must part; & I never parted with one whom I had known so short a time, with so much real regret & personal affection, as I did with John Keats when he left Oxford for London at the end of September, or the beginning of October 1817.—

We often projected meeting again with each other. But something or other always intervened to prevent it: &, except now & then I believe in London, this was the last, as it was certainly the longest, time I saw Keats. But living as we did for a month or six weeks together (for I do not remember exactly how long) I knew him at that period of his life, perhaps, as well as any one of his friends. There was no reserve of any kind between us.—His health then appeared perfectly good; while mine was quite the reverse. He was soon after seized with the fatal family disease, which terminated in his untimely death. The world may have lost much by the early blight of a blossom of such promise. But for himself, his removal must be accounted a happy one. I could almost say, in submission to the merciful Providence of the Almighty, that my own lot had been far happier, had your sentence of death upon me,¹³ along with my friend John Keats, been a true one.—It was a maxim of the ancients— “Quem Dii diligunt, adolescens moritur—” “The

¹² Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, II (1817), 13.

¹³ See II, 282n.

favorite of the Gods dies young.”¹⁴ And few, like myself, who have lived more than half a century in the world, & have been stript of their nearest & dearest ties to humanity,—do not echo the touching lines of the venerable living Bard, the greatest poet, and one of the best men of his age:—

“Oh Sir! the good die first
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket.”

*Wordsworth's Excursion.*¹⁵

I shall not do justice to Keats, if I do not say something further of his temper & manner, & of the style of his conversation, while I enjoyed the happiness & the privilege of his society.—His brother George says of him that to his brothers his temper was uncertain; & he himself confirms this judgment of him in a beautiful passage of a letter to myself (which you have printed, Vol 1 p 146) where he thus speaks of his brothers:—“My love for my brothers, from the early loss of our parents, & even from earlier misfortunes, has grown into an affection, “passing the love of women.” I have been ill tempered with them, I have vexed them,—but the thought of them has always stifled the impression that any woman might otherwise have made upon me.” This might have been so with his brothers. But with his friends, a sweeter tempered man I never knew, than was John Keats. Gentleness was indeed his proper characteristic, without one particle of dullness, or insipidity, or want of spirit. Quite the contrary. “He was gentle but not fearful,” in the chivalric & moral sense of the term “gentle.” He was pleased with every thing that occurred in the ordinary mode of life, & a cloud

¹⁴ Plautus, *Bacchides*, IV.vii.16f.

¹⁵ See II, 259n.

never passed over his face, except of indignation at the wrongs of others.

His conversation was very engaging. He had a sweet-toned voice, "an excellent thing" in *man*, as well as "in woman."¹⁶ A favorite expression of tranquil pleasure & delight at a fine passage of any author, particularly an old poet, was "that it was *nice*," which he pronounced in a gentle undertone. In his letters he talks of *suspecting* everybody. It appeared not in his conversation. On the contrary, he was uniformly the apologist for poor, frail human nature, & allowed for people's faults more than any man I ever knew, (except one, my dear & excellent old friend, Sir William Rough, late Chief Justice of Ceylon)¹⁷ & especially for the faults of his friends. But if any act of wrong or oppression, of fraud or falsehood, was the topic, he rose into sudden & animated indignation. He had a truly poetic feeling for women; & he often spoke to me of his sister, who was somehow withholden from him, with great delicacy & tenderness of affection. He had a soul of noble integrity: & his common sense was a conspicuous part of his character. Indeed his character was, in the best sense, manly.

Our conversation rarely or never flagged, during our walks, or boatings, or in the Evening. And I have retained a few of his opinions on Literature & Criticism which I will detail.

The following passage from Wordsworth's ode on Immortality was deeply felt by Keats, who however at this time seemed to me to value this great Poet rather in particular passages than in the full length portrait, as it were, of the great imaginative & philosophic Christian Poet, which he really is, & which Keats obviously, not long afterwards, felt him to be.

¹⁶ *King Lear*, V.iii.272f.

¹⁷ See II, 264. On Keats's suspecting everybody see Milnes, I, 145, and *Letters*, p. 151.

“Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks & praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense & outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprized.

The last lines he thought were quite awful in their application to a guilty finite creature, like man, in the appalling nature of the feeling which they suggested to a thoughtful mind.

Again, we often talked of that noble passage in the Lines on Tintern Abbey:—

“That blessed mood,
 In which *the burthen of the mystery*,
 In which the heavy & the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened.”

And his references to this passage are frequent ¹⁸ in his letters.—
 But in those exquisite stanzas:—

“She dwelt among the untrodden ways,
 Beside the springs of Dove—”

ending,—

She lived unknown & few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be;
 But she is in her grave, & oh,
The difference to me”—

¹⁸ *Letters*, pp. 140, 144, gives only two references.

the simplicity of the last line he declared to be the most perfect pathos.

Among the qualities of high poetic promise in Keats was, even at this time, his correct taste. I remember to have been struck with this by his remarks on that well known & often quoted passage of the *Excursion*¹⁹ upon the Greek Mythology,—where it is said that

“Fancy fetched
Even from the blazing Chariot of the Sun
A beardless youth who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.”

Keats said this description of Apollo should have ended at the “golden lute,” & have left it to the imagination to complete the picture,—*how* he “filled the illumined groves.” I think every man of taste will feel the justice of the remark.

Every one now knows what was then known to his friends, that Keats was an ardent admirer of Chatterton. The melody of the verses of “the marvellous Boy who perished in his pride,”²⁰ enchanted the author of *Endymion*. Methinks I now hear him recite, or *chant*, in his peculiar manner, the following stanza of the “Roundelay sung by the minstrels of Ella”:

“Come with acorn cup & thorn,
Drain my hertys blood away;
Life & all its goods I scorn;
Dance by night or feast by day.”²¹

¹⁹ IV.857-860.

²⁰ Wordsworth, “Resolution and Independence,” line 43.

²¹ “Mynstrelles Songe,” stanza 8, in *Ælla: A Tragycal Enterlude*, lines 893-896 (*Rowley Poems*, ed. M. E. Hare [1911], p. 138). Keats probably read it in Robert Southey and Joseph Cottle’s edition of Chatterton’s *Works*, II (1803), 283.

The first line to his ear possessed the great charm. Indeed his sense of melody was quite exquisite, as is apparent in his own verses; & in none more than in numerous passages of his *Endymion*.

Another object of his enthusiastic admiration was the Homeric character of Achilles—especially when he is described as “shouting in the trenches.” (See his letter to his brother George & his wife, Vol 1 p 235)

One of his favorite topics of discourse was the principle of melody in Verse, upon which he had his own notions, particularly in the management of open & close vowels. I think I have seen a somewhat similar theory attributed to Mr Wordsworth. But I do not remember his laying it down in writing. Be this as it may, Keats's theory²² was worked out by himself. He was himself, as already observed, a master of melody, which may be illustrated by almost numberless passages of his poems. As an instance of this, I may cite a few lines of that most perfect passage of *Hyperion*, which has been quoted by more than one of your Reviewers—the picture of dethroned Satan in his melancholy solitude. Keats's theory was, that the vowels should be so managed as not to clash one with another so as to mar the melody,—& yet that they should be interchanged, like differing notes of music to prevent monotony. The following lines will, I think, illustrate his theory, as I understood him.

“Dēep īn thē shādy sādness ōf ā vāle,
 Fār sūnken from the hēalthy brēath of mōrn—
 Fār frōm thē fiēry mōōn²³ & ēve's ōne stār—
 Sāt grey haired Sātūrn, quīet as a stōne,
 Stīll as the sīlence round about his lāir:
 Fōrest on fōrest hung about his hēād
 Like clōūd on clōūd.”

²² The most recent discussion of this supposed theory is that by W. J. Bate, *The Stylistic Development of Keats* (1945), pp. 51-56, 65.

²³ For noon. (So, above, Satan for Saturn.)

These lines are exquisitely wrought into melody. They are beautifully varied in their vowel sounds, save when the exception proves the rule, & monotony is a beauty; as in the prolonged breathing, as it were, of the similar vowels in "hēalthy brēath of morn," in which we almost inhale the freshness of the morning air; & in the vowel sounds repeated in the words—

" Sāt grey haired Sātūrn"—and
Fōrest on fōrest—"like clōud on clōud"—

In all which the sameness of the sound increases the melancholy & monotony of the situation of the dethroned Father of the Gods. The rest is beautiful by its skilful variation of the vowel-sounds; as these are touching by their sameness & monotony.

You mention Keats's taste for painting & music. (vol 2 p 68) Of the first I remember no more than his general love of the art, & his admiration of Haydon. But I well remember his telling me that, had he studied music, he had some notions of the combinations of sounds, by which he thought he could have done something as original as his poetry.

I have now, I think, exhausted my personal reminiscences of John Keats, save such as may occur to me in my remarks upon your volumes, which I have read with deep & increasing interest. I have indeed something to say upon the treatment he experienced at the hands of the Scotch critics, (which will properly be embodied in these remarks) who, though they would be esteemed as scholars & men of taste, proved themselves, in poor Keats's case, as eminently deficient in pure taste as they undoubtedly were in good feeling.

I shall now make a few observations which are suggested by your volumes, & then, my dear Sir, release you from this long, & I fear tedious letter.

At page 4 of your first volume you have stated that Keats

"had two brothers, George older than himself, Thomas, younger, & a sister much younger." I doubt not that you will find surviving friends who, better than myself, will be able to correct this statement, for I think it is slightly erroneous. As far as I remember, John was the eldest of the family. I think I so understood from himself. George was the second, & Thomas, whom he always called Tom, the youngest. The sister was undoubtedly the youngest of the whole. George was the only one I knew personally. He was a man of much larger frame of body, & taller than John: with a family resemblance; but there appeared a want of refinement, & generally of intellectual endowments, immeasurably inferior to John. Nor, if I remember, was he a great favorite with the poet's friends. Tom I never saw. John always spoke very tenderly of his sister, as I have already remarked; but the guardians, I apprehend, had some feelings of repugnance to her being at that time under the protection of himself & his brothers; & my impression is confirmed by this passage of his letter to myself during his Scottish tour, from Inverary (Vol 1 p 278):—"I could not have had a greater pleasure in these parts than your mention of my Sister. She is very much prisoned from me. I am afraid it will be some time before I can take her to many places I wish."

At p 25 I am mentioned among his earlier friends, even I think before the publication of his first volume. It was after this publication, as already stated, that I knew him.

In an early letter to M^r Reynolds, p 32, from the Isle of Wight, Carisbrooke, April 17 1817, Keats mentions a head of Shakspeare which he found in the house at which he lodged,— & which, he tells M^r Haydon in the next letter, "came nearer to his idea of him than any he had seen; & that the old woman (of the house) made him take it away with him. I rather suspect that this engraving is, if not in my possession, among some pictures & prints I left with my family in 1831, before I came out

to India. A year or two after his death I received a book, & a fine old engraving of Shakspeare, from M^r Brown. The book is characteristic of Keats, & shews that he read other & better books than Lempriere's Dictionary, on the Greek Mythology, as was sneeringly said of him by the vulgar, would-be critics of the day. —The book,—a fine old Quarto, which now lies before me, with his name,—“John Keats, 1819,” written at the top corner of the title page,—is “Auctores Mythographi Latini, Cajus Julius Hyginus, Fab. Planciad, Fulgentius, Lactantius Placidus, Albricus Philosophus. Lugd. Bat. Amstelaed. 1742.” Fronting the title page is a curious engraving mingling together the higher Deities, & the torments of the Infernal Regions. It contains upwards of 900 pages, & is a very learned work.²⁴ In the fly leaf I find this written memorandum by myself:—“This book formed part of the collection of the late John Keats, who died in Italy. He desired that his books should be distributed among his friends: & after his death this volume, with a print of Shakspeare, was sent me by Charles Browne Esq^r—July 1823.”—

In the letter to M^r Reynolds was sent that noble sonnet on the sea,—“It keeps eternal whisperings around,”—which with others you have placed, among the poetical Remains, at the end of the 2nd Volume,—with, by the way, an erroneous date of *August* instead of *April*.²⁵ Would you allow me to suggest that, in a future edition, this, & the other Sonnets included in letters, be restored to their several & appropriate places? The effect is lost by having to refer to the end of the second volume; & much confusion is created. A printed *erratum* corrects in one instance an erroneous reference. All the other poems, sent in letters, *are* so printed. They would obviously have lost their peculiar zest,

²⁴ Told in Milnes, 1867, p. 173n., and *Aldine*, p. xii. See I, 260, note 67.

²⁵ Milnes, II, 291. In his 1867 edition, p. 32, he gives the sonnet its correct date, and adopts Bailey's suggestion by putting the poems in the letters.

had they been divorced from their original destination; & so do the sonnets.

I well remember poor Haydon's Picture of Christ's entering Jerusalem. I was sometimes among the loungers in his painting room, & distinctly recollect the portrait of Sir Isaac Newton & Wordsworth among the devout worshippers, & Voltaire "grinning infamy," among the Scoffers. Keats alludes to Wordsworth's portrait in an early letter (p 40) to Haydon. I never saw this picture after it was completed. But the principal figure, which seems to have won the admiration of M^{rs} Siddons,²⁶ (& laudari à laudatâ fæminâ,²⁷ such as M^{rs} S is no small praise) was, however, during the progress of the picture, by Haydon's friends thought to bear too close a resemblance to the face of the Artist himself. I apprehend this was amended. I have a vivid remembrance of one beautiful female figure, a young girl in a reverent posture at the feet of the Saviour. It was the more interesting to one of my friends, inasmuch as it bore a strong resemblance to a beautiful girl whom he had known, & who had died in her bloom. As this is a gossiping letter of *memorabilia*, perhaps you will allow me to transcribe two Stanzas, written at the time upon this female,²⁸ which I find among my papers. Should they ever meet the eyes of some of your readers, they will perhaps be recognized.

"On a female Figure in M^r Haydon's
Picture of Christ entering Jerusalem.

²⁶ See Penrose, pp. 242-244.

²⁷ Compare Naevius, *Hector Proficiscens* (Otto Ribbeck, *Scenicae romanorum poesis*, I [1855], 7). "Laetus sum, laudaro me abs te, pater, a laudato viro" (several times quoted by Cicero).

²⁸ Pope, pp. 633-635, shows that Haydon's penitent girl resembled an unknown girl with whom Reynolds was in love and who died before January, 1815. There is another copy of Bailey's poem, dated 1817, in "Poems by Two Friends" (Bailey and Reynolds), a manuscript in the Leigh Browne collection, Keats Museum.

1

Her arms are folded meekly on her breast;
 Fixed on her Saviour is her soft dark eye,
 Where woman's tenderness, sweetly exprest,
 Is blent with comely low humility:
 She seems the very form of piety,—
 God's lowliest, loveliest, most belovèd creature;
 Her bended knee will lift her to the sky,
 The modest light informing every feature,
 Will shine, like Jesus' head, in her more glorious nature.

2

Is she the child of fiction or of truth?
 Can such a creature bear a human heart?
 Can holy wisdom harmonize with youth,
 Like that which sheds its beams from every part
 Of this fair vision of creative art?
 Methinks I hear sad sorrow softly sigh,
 (And oh! she forceth feelings tear to start:)
 "Such one there was: a seraph now on high
 She lives, nor knows the touch of mortal misery.

1815-16.

It is curious to read one's own death so deliberately registered, as you have done at p 62 of your first volume. I have read it in other publications; & a letter of my brother to the Editor of the *Athenaeum*, my old friend M^r Dilke, asserting my living identity,²⁹ has been the round of the *Calcutta papers*.

At p 68 Keats's letter to myself ends with these words—

²⁹ In the review of Milnes, *Athenaeum*, August 19, 1848, p. 825, Dilke wrote, "The Rev. Benjamin Bailey is yet living—or was so not long since—. . . at Ceylon." Edward Bailey wrote on August 23 (the same, August 26, p. 859) confirming Dilke's correction.

My best regards to Gleig, my brother's to you & M^{rs} Bentley?"
Is this so in the Manuscript? ³⁰

Your remarks at p 80 that Keats, when he wrote those beautiful Stanzas "On seeing a lock of Milton's hair,"—that "at this time he had not studied "Paradise Lost," as he did afterwards," <has> are perfectly just. I was a great student of Milton when a young man; & I yet possess Todd's edition, which has been 33 years upon my <shevel> shelves, with passages marked in ink, & similar passages cited & referred to, & some M.S. notes This edition Keats saw when he visited me. But, like Reynolds, he was then far more enamoured of the beauties of Spenser & the Faery Queen. The subsequent study of Milton gave his mind a mighty addition of energy & manly vigour, which stand out so nobly in Hyperion. As a known lover of Milton among my friends, he sent me those exquisite verses on Milton's hair.

The notice of Endymion in the Oxford Herald, shortly after it came out, which is acknowledged in a letter by Keats at p 145 of your first Volume, I have not seen since it was written. But it will be ere now in your hands; for a college friend of my Son's has, I believe, recovered it.³¹ It of course will exhibit a crude & undistinguishing admiration. But with all its faults—& they lie on the surface—Endymion is surely a most wonderful effort of Genius by a young man of 21 or 22 years of Age. The subterranean scenery of the second Book, & the submarine beauties of the third, do indeed display what an able Reviewer well describes to be "Giant Imagination playing fancifully in building up scenes of Magic, through which the wanderer

³⁰ The manuscript has "M^{rs} Bentley's," a reference to the wife of Benjamin Bentley, the postman-landlord of the Keats brothers in Well Walk (*Letters*, p. 70).

³¹ The copy of Bailey's two letters (signed "N.Y.") to the editor of the Oxford *Herald* (May 30, June 6, 1818), made by his son's friend, is in the Harvard Keats collection.

travels in amazement.”³² While the artistic painting of Bacchus, which seems to have been copied from a well known picture of Titian,³³ of which, the Original³⁴ is in the National Gallery, into words “pregnant with ethereal hues,”³⁵ in the fourth book, displays a marvellous variety & <versatility> versatility of power in depicting both the beautiful & the sublime. For if this picture of Bacchus, the sleeping Adonis, another Titianlike picture, & many others crowding thick as the leaves in Spring-tide,³⁶ be limnings of the beautiful, a more sublime imagining can hardly be found in English Poetry than when

“Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below,
 Came mother Cybele! alone—alone—
 In sombre Chariot; dark foldings thrown
 About her Majesty, & front death-pale,
 With turrets crowned. Four maned lions hale
 The sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,
 Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws
 Uplifted drowsily, & nervy tails
 Cowering their tawny brushes. *Silent sails*
This shadowy Queen athwart, & faints away
In another gloomy arch.”

Book 2.³⁷

I should not here have noticed this poem,—which I have lately read over again more than once, & very carefully,—but that I shall soon have to state my recollections of the disgusting attack upon its highly endowed Author in the Blackwood Magazine³⁸

³² *Church of England Quarterly Review*, January, 1849 (XXV, 158).

³³ See II, 133n.

³⁴ It was a favorite of Haydon, who probably took Keats to see it.

³⁵ Wordsworth, “High is our calling,” line 3.

³⁶ Compare *Endymion*, III.839.

³⁷ Lines 639-649.

³⁸ III, 519-524, by Lockhart: see below.

of August 1818, the month after my first visit to Scotland. Is such a writer as of the above cited passage, one who ought to have been treated with bitter contempt?

The annotation of Keats seen by Captain Medwin in a folio Edition of Shakspeare, on Agamemnon's speech in *Troilus & Cressida*, (p 151) brings to my mind a far finer passage in Act iii Scene 3 of that play, in the speech of Ulyses to Achilles—

“Time hath, My Lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he put alms for Oblivion,
A great sized monster of ingritudes:
Those scraps are good deeds past which are devoured
As fast as they are made, forgotten soon
As done.”

Keats admired & was fond of reciting this passage. It was, he thought, pregnant with practical wisdom, such as Shakspeare alone could produce.

Your narrative next takes Keats, on his northern tour with M^r Brown, to Carlisle on the 1st of July 1818. I went thither shortly after, & lived there nearly a year, having a curacy in the neighbourhood. The poet was to have visited me in his way back from the Scottish Highlands; but he proceeded homeward to London by himself in consequence of a sore throat. M^r Brown came alone to Carlisle on his way homeward, & spent some days with me. Keats wrote to me from Inverary before he left the Highlands, (p 173) & inclosed to me those beautiful verses beginning

“There is a charm in footing slow across a silent plain,
Where patriot battle had been fought, when glory had
the gain”

which you have appended to that letter. In his letter, as well to Reynolds a few days prior to mine, as to myself, he speaks of his visit to Burns's cottage, the river Doon, & Kirk Alloway; & to Reynolds he says that he should look upon it in retrospect with the "same unmixed pleasure he did on his Stratford-on-Avon day"³⁹ with myself, of which I have spoken.

It was about this time, the latter part of July 1818, that I paid my first visit to Scotland, to my friend Gleig, (afterwards my brother in law,) at his father's, the late Venerable Bishop Gleig, the Primus or Premier Bishop of the Scottish Episcopal Church, too well known in the literary & scientific world to need further mention. Here I met a Gentleman,⁴⁰ then & since well known as one of the principal contributors to Blackwood's Magazine, which was then a novel publication, got up avowedly in opposition to the Edinburgh Review, & the Whig party in politics,—& to the discredit of M^r (now Lord) Jeffrey—not even redeemed by his honorable, though too late, advocacy of poor Keats—the unrelenting antagonist of M^r Wordsworth. Literature & <Chr> criticism, as well as politics, were degraded⁴¹ into themes of party-strife, & unmanly violence. I had always been, (at least from the year 1813) through good & through evil report, one among the few unflinching <adherents of> admirers of Mr Wordsworth's <school, upon> poetry, now almost universally appreciated, but upon which as much (& yet more) foolish ridicule was poured, as upon Keats. On this ground therefore we met as friends & allies; regarding Keats & the proscrib<1>ed Endymion, we were as uncompromising antagonists.

The war had already begun, in Blackwood, under the head of "Cockney School of Poetry": & it is mentioned in the

³⁹ See Milnes, I, 168.

⁴⁰ See I, 245-247, and the letter next following.

⁴¹ *Changed from depressed.*

cover or outside sheet of a letter from Keats to my-self which you have printed (Vol 1 p 193). One number had been published on M^r Hunt, of which Keats says— "I never read any thing so virulent—accusing him of the greatest crimes, depreciating his wife, his poetry, his habits, his conversation." Keats expected that his turn would come. "They have (he continues) prefixed a motto from one Cornelius Webb, "Poetaster"—who, unfortunately, was of our party occasionally at Hampstead, & took it into his head to write the following: something about, "We'll talk <of> on Wordsworth, Byron, a theme we never tire on;" & so forth till he comes to Hunt & Keats. In the motto they have put Hunt & Keats in large letters." ⁴²

Not only Keats & his friends, but the reading public in general, were prepared for what was to follow, to "make them sport." I took occasion, therefore, seriously to expostulate with this Gentleman regarding Keats; that he was a young man, to whom M^r Hunt had shewn kindness which called forth gratitude in so young & warm a bosom,—but that he himself mingled in no party-politics, & as I could confidently say, from his own lips, saw the weakness of his friend, & the impolicy of having his name mixed up with so decidedly a party-man as M^r Hunt. I gave him an outline of Keats's history—that he had been brought up as a surgeon & apothecary; & though not highly, that he was respectably educated. I insisted, if I rightly remember, on the injustice and cruelty of thus condemning & crushing a young man who, from feelings most honourable to <himself> human nature, adhered personally to the man who had befriended him when he was friendless, & needed a kindly eye & a helping hand. But I distinctly remember saying something to this effect, "Now do not avail yourself of my information,

⁴² This particular poem did much to ruin Keats's reputation. One of its lines, "The Muses' son of promise," was continually bandied to and fro by the critics.

which I give you in this friendly manner, to attack him in your next number of Blackwood." His answer too, I well remember, was to the effect *that HE certainly should not do so.*"

This conversation took place at the latter end of July; & in the following month of August, came out that infamous article, ending with "Go back to your Gallipots, Johnny."!

I make no further comment than that the coincidence was so extraordinary, that, until cleared up,—& it never has been cleared up to this day, now nearly 31 <days> years ago,—my inevitable conclusion was, that my communications had been taken advantage of. I have never met that Gentleman since. But at this distance of time, I should be extremely glad to be assured that it was *merely* a coincidence,—*which it is possible it might be*, & the writer of that article *might* have derived his information from other sources. It is, however, very painful to have the impression upon one's mind that one[']s confidence has been abused, & that to the injury of a beloved friend. But it will not, I think, be subject of surprise that this impression was then made upon my mind, & that it still clings to it. I repeat that I shall be most glad to have it removed.—I am so exceedingly unwilling, that it seems to me a thing impossible to believe, that the ingenuous & highly gifted Christopher North, (not however the person here designated, for I do not know him) himself a poet of no common order, could have been so wanting in common kindness & humanity, not to mention the very bad taste of such a production, as to be the Author of that disgraceful passage upon the Author of Endymion, scornfully & abusively bidding him "back to his Gallipots."

It is very true that Keats inscribed his first volume of ⁴³ Mr Leigh Hunt, & addressed to him a sonnet on his liberation from prison. But the very contents of that volume (of how much <more> higher promise than Lord Byron's "Hours of Idle-

⁴³ For to.

ness!") might convince every one who desired to arrive at true conclusions, that the Author was a very harmless politician. <Indeed> For Keats's politics at all times, as indeed things greatly more important, were but the echo, which young men of warm temperament so easily take up, of the society of those who were really interested in what they discussed. It was a union of bad taste & bad feeling, far more than political hostility, which determined the Blackwood men, & the Editor of the Quarterly Review, to endeavour to their utmost to crush a young aspirant to literary honours like Keats, along with the undoubted party men who happened to be his friends. Yet the Blackwood men, My dear Sir, were not surely "persons destitute of all poetic perception," not incapable of "understanding the intellectual merits of political opponents, against whom they directed an unrefined & unscrupulous Satire." ⁴⁴ Had they been so, they had been comparatively blameless. Their due appreciation of Wordsworth alone forbids us to entertain this conviction. Nor can the "Quarterly,"—if, as is pretty well known, Mr Gifford were the Author of that unscrupulous & stupid review,—be absolved on this plea. He who had translated Juvenal, & himself had known what it was, in the language of his own poet, for virtuous poverty to struggle against adversity—

Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat

Res angusta domi;—⁴⁵

he who moreover had written those touching Stanzas ⁴⁶ appended in the notes to the *Mæviad*,—

"I wish I was where Anna lies;"—&c

Mr Gifford, who had struggled so hardly & so <honestly> honorably up to the eminence on which he stood, & had been once

⁴⁴ Milnes, I, 198f.

⁴⁵ Juvenal, III.164f.

⁴⁶ "The Grave of Anna," in the notes to line 205 (*The Baviad, and Mæviad* [8th ed., 1811], pp. 100-102).

impressed with such tender feelings as a man, was without excuse in his heartless attempt to crush the youthful Author of *Endymion*.

I think you do Wordsworth & Southey less than justice at page 195 of your first Volume, especially Wordsworth, whose consistency of principle is apparent in his sonnets to Liberty,— & his noble & eloquent pamphlet worthy of Milton himself, now very scarce, on the Convention of Cintra. And see M^r Henry Taylor's recent publication of "Notes from Books" ⁴⁷ for the politics of our great Poets, <& of *Wordsworth & Southey*.> and more particularly of Wordsworth. But the treatment of Keats is my proper subject, & to that I will adhere.

Your remarks on the school of Hunt & his *Coterie* are, I agree, perfectly just; & Keats, in his *Endymion*, was not free from their blemishes. But what were these, more than spots in the sun, when we look at the blaze of light, scattered as it were from his wings, "soaring in the high reason of his fancies, with his garland & singing robes about him"? ⁴⁸ And in the language of our immortal Milton, in the same glorious passage, "the style" (of his poetry in general, & of *Endymion* in particular) "by certain signs" ⁴⁹ it had, was likely to live." And the conviction, so strongly felt by Keats himself, that he should survive among the poets of his country, together with the quiet & often indifferent manner in which he speaks both of the Blackwood & Quarterly attacks, prove <this> to demonstration that the indignation of his friends, & the scoffings of his enemies, & of heartless & envious men like Lord Byron, touching the supposed fatal consequence ⁵⁰ of his death by these criticisms, are

⁴⁷ London, 1849.

⁴⁸ Milton, *The Reason of Church Government*, 1642, Book II, Introduction (*Student's Milton*, ed. F. A. Patterson [1930], p. 524).

⁴⁹ Milton says, "by certain vital signs."

⁵⁰ Originally plural.

equally groundless. How admirably he speaks of himself in the letter to M^r Hessay, (Vol 1 p 214) that "his own domestic criticism had given him pain without comparison beyond what Blackwood, or the Quarterly could inflict." And in a letter to his brother George & his wife, (p 227) when speaking of the letter in his favor in the Chronicle, which M^r Hessay had sent him, & upon which he wrote the above, & one written by Reynolds in the Exeter paper, he says— "This is a mere matter of the moment: I think I shall be among the English poets after my death. Even as a matter of present interest, the attempt to crush me in the Quarterly, has only brought me more into notice, & it is a common expression among book-men, "I wonder the Quarterly should cut its own throat"

That he was discouraged, at a time too when ⁵¹ his health was visibly failing, we must conclude from the publisher's advertisement ⁵² to the last volume, with the fragment of *Hyperion*. To Reynolds, he says somewhere, that he did not continue *Hyperion* because the labor of the Miltonic inversion of style, which it required, was too much for him. In fact, he was then a dying man. He could have soared an Eagle flight above his paltry reviewers, had he not been stricken down by the Hand of God. That his unhappy passion hastened on his fatal disease, is but too probable. Had M^r Jeffrey come sooner to the rescue, the public might have been sooner undeceived; & some brighter gleams of comfort might probably have been flung on the death-pillow of the poet.

The only other subject of importance which remains for me to speak upon, is the *religion* of John Keats: & as a Clergyman, & his friend when my own mind was fully & gravely determined to my sacred profession, it may not unreasonably be expected I should say something.

⁵¹ *Written when when.*

⁵² Keats described it as a lie: see Lowell, II, 425.

His confession of his sceptical nature in all things, "so as sometimes to think poetry a Jack O Lanthorn" to amuse the idle,⁵³ is indeed a dark view of his own mind, & of the moods of mind *sometimes* in all thoughtful men. "At *sometime* (says the pious & judicious Hooker *) who doubteth not? I will not here allege the sundry confessions of the perfectest that have lived upon earth, concerning their great imperfections in this way, which if I did, I should dwell too long upon a matter sufficiently known by every faithful man that <the> doth know himself." ⁵⁴

If so profound a Divine, & so devout a man as Hooker lays down his proneness to doubt as one of the inheritances of our fallen nature, we cannot, or we should not, be surprised that a mind so left to itself—an orphan mind—from his earliest years, & so full of thought, which is the very seed-plot of doubt, should be thus affected: & it is like the honesty of his character which made him thus speak out.—In one word his religious education seems to have been greatly or wholly neglected; and he was early thrown among men, such as his friend M^r Hunt, (who I have heard, & *hope*, has amended this fatal error) and of others of the literary Society of that day. Yet he was no scoffer, & in no sense was he an infidel. When he visited me at Oxford, I had much earnest conversation with him on this subject. He well knew, & always respected my feelings & principles. He promised me, & I believe he kept his promise, that he would never scoff at religion. And when he returned to London,—it was remarked to me afterwards by one of his most intimate

* Not *Bishop* Hooker, as John Keats calls him in one of his letters Vol 1 p 230.—

⁵³ See Milnes, I, 219, and *Letters*, p. 111.

⁵⁴ Hooker, "A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certainty and Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect," about 1586 (*Works*, ed. John Keble [7th ed., 1888], III, 471).

friends,—there was a decided change in his manner regarding religion.

And now having fairly met the worst features of the case, let us see whether he himself does not exhibit some redeeming points; for his character of mind is perfectly transparent; he had no trick to hide his defects. In one of his own beautiful letters to his brother George & his wife, to whom he communicates the danger of their younger brother Tom, is this touching passage:—"I could not bring myself to say the truth, that he is no better, but much worse; however, it must be told, & you, my dear brother & sister, take example from me, & bear up against any calamity, for my sake, as I do for yours. *Ours are ties, which, independent of their own sentiment, are sent us by Providence, to prevent the effects of one great solitary grief:* I have Fanny, (his sister) & I have you—three people whose happiness, to me, is sacred, & it does annul that selfish sorrow which I should otherwise fall into, living, as I do, with poor Tom, who looks upon me as his only comfort. The tears will come into your eyes: let them; & embrace each other; *thank Heaven for what happiness you have, & after thinking a moment or two that you suffer in common with all mankind, hold it not a sin to regain your Cheerfulness.*" (Vol 1 pp 224, 225—

Again, when he communicates his younger brother's death to the same brother & sister, he says—"I will not enter into any parsonic comments on death. Yet the commonest observations of the commonest people on Death are true as ⁵⁵ proverbs. *I have a firm belief in immortality, & so had Tom.*" ⁵⁶ He then goes on to speak of our mutual recognition after death. "Sometimes I imagine an immense separation, (his brother & sister being in America) & sometimes, as at present, a direct

⁵⁵ Milnes, I, 246, and *Letters*, p. 246, have as their.

⁵⁶ Clarke, *Recollections of Writers* (1878), p. 157, makes this same point.

communication of Spirit with you. *That will be one of the Grandeurs of immortality. There will be no space, & consequently the only commerce between spirits will be by their intelligence of each other—when they will completely understand each other, while we in this world merely comprehend each other in different degrees; the higher the degree of Good, so higher is our Love & Friendship.*" Vol 1 pp 246, 247)

He who has thought so much of the state of disembodied spirits as to write such speculations in his most private letters, cannot be an Infidel as to the great truths of natural Religion, the Being of God, & the immortality of the soul.—

Another passage remains to be cited, in which we find that he did not hold these truths without some thought of, & we must hope *faith in the Saviour*.—

"What I heard Taylor observe with respect to Socrates is true of Jesus: that though he transmitted no writing of his own to posterity, we have his mind & his sayings & his greatness handed down⁵⁷ by others." (pp 266, 267)

Every one knows the parallel, so often quoted, of Rousseau,⁵⁸ between Socrates & Jesus Christ,—concluding that Jesus must be God. Whether Keats, whose reading was desultory, had met with this passage is uncertain. The above cited passage, I think, shows that his mind was gradually working itself round to the more healthy tone of a Disciple of Christ; & it argues perhaps rather a want of knowledge than of faith.

On his death bed, however, with that noble hearted friend, Mr Severn, by his side, we find that he heard Jeremy Taylor read to him. I have often wished that I had been with him in his last hours. And I am consoled to think he had Jeremy Taylor—we are not told what work, but most probably his Holy

⁵⁷ Milnes has down to us.

⁵⁸ In *Emile*, Book II. Keats owned a copy of this book: see I, 259, note 60.

Living & Dying—⁵⁹ read to him,—my most favorite Divine, as poor Keats well knew. His last scene, & his dying words were most solemn & affecting. "On the twenty third, (of February 1821) about four, the approaches of death came on. Severn—I—lift me up—I am dying—I shall die easily; dont be frightened—be firm, & *thank God it has come.*" (Vol 2 p 94)

Such were the last words,—& very solemn <of> & appropriate words they were,—of John Keats. What might have been wrought in his inner mind, during his protracted suffering, man cannot know. It is our wisdom & our duty, while it is the law of Christian Charity, to hope the best. For myself I do not doubt that such spirits as Keats, whose religious education has been neglected, but who have many virtues, few vices, & no irreverence towards their God & Saviour, are mercifully taken away to the better world in their youth, & preserved from the evil to come in their further passage through life, by the All-merciful God; & I humbly trust that the atoning Blood of Christ will eventually "cleanse from all sin" ⁶⁰ this erring child of humanity. He is gone whither we all shall soon follow him. We have to make up our own account. It is not our province to judge a fellow sinner. But in the words of an able Reviewer * of these volumes I shall close this affecting subject. I might say much more. But it is better to leave it here.

—— "It is ours to Judge <ones>" ⁶¹ Keats only as a poet: all other considerations are consigned to a Judgement that cannot

* In the Church of England Quarterly for January 1849 [XXV, 174.]

⁵⁹ Severn (*Atlantic Monthly*, XI [1863], 403) says that Keats asked for Taylor because he hoped he "might become *really* a Christian." Severn read to him *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and "it did not seem to require much effort in him to embrace the Holy Spirit in these comforting works." "I always think," Severn adds, "that he died a Christian."

⁶⁰ Compare Psalm 51:2.

⁶¹ The review *has* judge of.

err. As a poet he has won, & will maintain his place among the most tuneful of England's sons. When Gainsborough was in the dreamy ecstasy of death, he exclaimed, "We are all going to heaven, & Vandyke is of the party": So is Keats worthy to rank among the first children of song, & over his tomb might be fittingly inscribed,

"I, Too, IN ARCADIA!"

At page 279 of your first volume there is this remark on Book IV of *Paradise Lost*. "A friend of mine says this book has the finest opening of any." I believe I am that friend. We had much talk of Milton when Keats was at Oxford: & I remember that I expressed, though more at large, this opinion, or something to the effect here noted down.

And now, My dear Sir, I must end this long, & I fear tedious letter. You will think I have been "slow to begin & never ending." I have penned these remarks with rapidity,—yet not without much previous thought, & an earnest care, as I have gone along, as to the accuracy of what I have stated as facts. I now place the whole in your hands as *materiel*, to use or not to use, at your discretion. I beg you to accept my most cordial thanks for the very able manner in which you have vindicated the Character, & done merited honor to the name of one, whose Genius I did not & do not more fully admire than I entirely loved the MAN.

I have perused your interesting volumes with deeply gratified feelings; yet have I often been painfully affected. The cloud indeed has been tinted with much occasional brightness; but melancholy nevertheless has been greatly the predominant feeling.

"The clouds that gather round the setting Sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality." ⁶²

⁶² Wordsworth, "Intimations of Immortality," lines 197-199.

The retrospect of upwards of thirty years of life cannot fail to be a sad one. The young man standing by the old reproaches him with time wasted if not misspent,—opportunities lost,—& talents misapplied, or not sufficiently exerted. Past time is “as water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up again.”⁶³ Our age rarely or never fulfils the promise of our youth. “Attachments taken up in early life, which, warm & pleasant while they last, drop off & are left behind us in the necessary course of things”—friends severed by death, or alienated by other causes—the nearest & dearest ties violently rent asunder, & names cherished more than life itself now *but* names—these dreary & dark shadows of the past rise up before the mind’s eye as a troubled dream rather than reality. One solitary drop of consolation, & that a heavenly one, remains at the bottom of the vessel—the substantial faith, the confident assurance of *HEREAFTER!* Our interest in the Invisible World proportionally increases as our interest in the Visible fades away, like the waning crescent of the moon, before our eyes.

Notwithstanding, however, the unavoidable pressure of these thoughts & feelings upon the heart, the recollections brought up as it were from the very depths of the Soul, by the “Life & Letters of John Keats,” are among the most vivid of the few brighter & happier hours allotted to me in this vale of sorrow & disappointment.—“Very pleasantly did they pass, & moved smoothly & swiftly along. They are gone, but have left a relish & a fragrance upon the mind, & the remembrance of them is sweet.”

Believe me,
My dear Sir,
With much esteem & regard,
Yours most cordially,
B. Bailey.

⁶³ II Samuel 14:14.

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BENJAMIN BAILEY TO R. M. MILNES¹

11 May 1849

Colombo. May 11. 1849.

My dear Sir

I think it is two months since I wrote to you. At that time I had not your kind present of Keats's Volumes. They arrived a few days after I had despatched my letter to you. I did not choose, therefore, to inflict upon you a sheet of my *Kaligraphy*, merely of thanks, and have waited until I could have the satisfaction of announcing to you that I had at last fulfilled my promise of sending you the paper of *Reminiscences*²—which I had delayed so long that I was partly ashamed of myself. But hearing that an old friend of mine was going home by the steamer from Calcutta, and would touch at Point De Galle in our island, I determined to go thither to meet him; and thinking it a good opportunity of sending you this paper I set to work to draw it up; and my daughter copied it sheet by sheet as I wrote it. It is in the form of a Letter, and longer than I had intended it. But you will not make use of more or less than you find necessary or expedient. After all however, Sir J. Emerson Tennent will send it in the Gov^t Despatch Bag, which will ensure its safety, and you will get it more directly than by a private hand.

Allow me to invite your attention to one part of the paper, or letter, you will receive. This is the statement of my recollection of a conversation at Bishop Gleig's at Stirling in July 1818, the month prior to the article in Blackwood. Now I have not mentioned the *name* of that gentleman—it was Mr

¹ The preceding letter was enclosed in this one.

² *Perhaps Reminiscences.*

Lockhart—! ³ and I have with-holden it on the principle of justice, and not out of fear of Mr Lockhart, though not a Quixote in those matters of paper warfare, which I exceedingly dislike. But it is very *possible* that the writer of that vile paper might get the information elsewhere; and I do not believe that Mr Lockhart wrote the article himself. Still the *coincidence* is such that it is but justice to Mr Lockhart himself that he should have the opportunity of refuting it. I confess that I so far acted on the impression that Mr. L. had betrayed the conversation that I not only never saw Mr Lockhart from that day to the present hour; and that I never *sought* his acquaintance though he was the friend of Gleig & Christie ⁴ & others who were my friends.—But circumstantial evidence is not *positive*; and I do not consider myself justified in *naming* the person. But I do consider myself fully justified so to allude to the circumstance that ⁵ the person indicated may, if he please, take it to himself, and fulfil the proverb of “Qui capit ille facit.” If therefore Mr L. should ask whether he was indicated, should you publish the statement, you have my authority to say that he is, and to add why he was not named, & in my own words. He may deny the conversation, or he may have forgotten it. *I cannot forget it*; and when the fitting time is come I do not shrink from acknowledging my belief that he had betrayed the conversation. If he prove that he has not, I shall be glad to acknowledge my regret that I have done him the injustice. If he deny that such a conversation took place, I boldly stake my veracity against his. He may possibly treat me & poor Keats’s memory as he did the Sons of Ballantyne, and elegantly style it “*The Keats’ Humbug*”—as he styled the Ballantyne remonstrance.⁶ But I owe it to Keats’s memory,

³ See I, 245-247, II, 286.

⁴ See I, 233n.

⁵ *Written* that that.

⁶ *The Ballantyne-Humbug Handled* (Edinburgh, 1839).

to Mr Lockhart himself, & most of all to truth to state what I have stated.

In the packet along with Keats's papers, I have added the only copy I have of a printed pamphlet of letters I wrote in 1844 in the Colonial Newspapers. I sent a Copy to Lord Stanley,⁷ then Secretary for the Colonies, who acknowledged the receipt of it. Sir W. Molesworth,⁸ in the House recently, asserted that the *Clergy*, as well as the late *Archdeacon*, were Coffee-planters. It is false. But *one* clergyman *and* the late Archdeacon,⁹ 2 out of about 25, were engaged in Coffee planting. And they are the only department of the Service [?] of this Island of whom this can be asserted.

If ever an opportunity offer, will you kindly do us justice, & contradict this statement; and oblige the Clergy generally, and *one* particularly who is already your obliged

and faithful

B Bailey.

»» 255 ««

SUMNER JONES¹ TO R. M. MILNES

25 July 1849

36 George Street, Euston Square,
25th July. 1849.

Dear Sir,

Permit me to bring to your recollection, that long ago you responded to an application which I ventured in my ex-

⁷ Edward Geoffrey Smith-Stanley (1799-1869), Lord Stanley of Bickerstaffe, later (1851) twenty-third Earl of Derby.

⁸ See II, 258n.

⁹ J. M. Glenie (see the *Royal Kalendar* [1847], p. 465).

¹ Theodore Watts-Dunton (*Athenaeum*, September 21, 28, 1878, pp. 368-370, 401-403, October 12, pp. 466-468) discusses Mary, Ebenezer, and Sumner Jones than whom "not even the Brontës were more remarkable

tremity to make to you for pecuniary assistance; and in the promptest and kindest manner sent me £10.—Will you extend the generous construction which you put upon my motives and intentions *then*; to my endeavour *now* to reimburse you, altho' it but results in my being able at this moment, to wait upon you herewith with the first moiety of that sum, in the enclosed £5 note.

I hope that you will,—trusting to my promise that the remainder-half shall more speedily follow.—

I ought to, and believe me, I do—offer you many & sincere apologies for the delay in thus even half-discharging my debt to you. Still in justice to myself, allow me to say that it would not have been *so* long, but that I hesitated to send less than the whole, and one exigency and another continually occurring, has ever unfortunately broken in upon the portion gradually saved by for this purpose,—ever I assure you steadily kept in view. Now however I venture to take this step—and make this promise for the rest,—deeming that better than that I should remain open to misconception, or than that you should misjudge me in your thought.

I hope I am right in this. The *next* occasion will obviously be a more fitting one, for recording my heartfelt thanks to you—yet I cannot quite refrain *now* from assuring you how I

for precocity—perhaps not even for genius." The three "were as full of the potentialities of genius as the 'nightingale's eggs' are full, we are told, of the potentialities of song." "A large mass of writing," he says, "both in prose and verse, was produced by the two brothers, without a thought of any other publication than that of reading it to Mary." Sumner, a hard-working clerk in a City warehouse, "through Thomas Hood and others, had some slight contact with the literary world." "He wrote dramas, lyrics, sonnets—all of them full of the noblest aspirations and tenderest feelings." R. H. Shepherd, editing Ebenezer's *Studies of Sensation and Event* (1879), p. xlv n., also praises Sumner's "beautiful verses." In that book two of his poems are printed (pp. lv f.).

cherish in my "heart of hearts" ² the remembrance of your goodness to me.—I well may—for it saved me from what was even worse than physical want.—Nor was it supplied merely to that hour and that need, but it abides with me, and will, and, speaking very earnestly, (though that may not be apparent here,) I do regard my lasting obligation to you, as more than the pecuniary part of it—by as much as "the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment" ³—a truth which in all your writings, you, Sir, suffer me to say, have with various beauty illustrated so feelingly and so well.—

With somewhat less of the constraint perhaps inevitable to a topic of this nature— I venture now to ask you 'ere closing my letter,—if among the many who must have thanked you most warmly for your late admirable Volumes the "Life Letters and Literary Remains of John Keats"—you will permit me to be one? So soon as I could procure the loan of the Vols: I perused them with avidity, and though the record is so sad—so touchingly sad—that over many pages one could not but be deeply, painfully moved— I ended, feeling that it was well to have read them for many reasons—and chiefly for the Poets sake.

For I never could endure the thought that Keats had been "Killed" by the Reviewers! I deemed of so true, so rarely-gifted a Bard, that he should have had a nobler—a stronger and a more soaring spirit—not to be that way baffled or quenched—and I rejoiced greatly to find from your eloquent vindication of his memory that it *was so*.

I had shared to the full the misconceptions so widely prevalent on the subject—and had taken for true that poor lament of a contemporaneous writer;

² *Hamlet*, III.ii.78.

³ *Matthew* 6:25.

Keats! thou didst sink,

"With the first stone cast at thy martyred fame

"How like the snow that's ruined by a sound! ⁴

(though the frigid conceit should have taught me better—) and I pitied the Man—while I loved the Poet, and wished often that he had had a braver soul.—"still to beat on—and steer

"Right upwards!— ⁵

But now you have taught me—and how many many thousands more—that it is no wretched sorrow we should feel for Keats—his early death—his ill-appreciated life—but rather a noble grief that finds consolation in the greatness of his soul—and so it was—and to his Poems I went to console me after reading the sad story of his life. Surely, Sir, of him we may say "Thou hast the dew of thy youth!" ⁶—Shall I make bold to add—that it is because you have *not* sought to cover with a thin veil of optimism all the melancholy history you had to unfold, that the conclusions you have so finely drawn from it, found the readier acknowledgment in my heart.

I think now so differently of Keats, that it is really having to thank you for a new sensation.—I turn to your volumes—your work of love so sacredly fulfilled—and I see how surely from the Winter of a great Poet's life is born the Spring of his fame; where his glad thoughts—and tender and subtle imaginings, burst forth beneath a pure sky amid gentle winds rejoicing,—charming all hearts by their loveliness, and sweetly invigorating us with the perception of their own perpetual youth.

I should perhaps ask you to pardon me for indulging in this unreserved expression of my sentiments. But they spring so

⁴ The concluding lines of a sonnet "In Memory of Keats," dated 1823, in S. Laman Blanchard's *Lyric Offerings* (1829), p. 62, a book dedicated to Lamb.

⁵ Misquoted from Milton's 1655 sonnet to Cyriack Skinner.

⁶ Psalm 110:3.

warmly from my heart;—from the love and reverence I have for the Poet—you have done honour to—and the feeling that I owe you much, for all that I have learnt from your admirable work; a feeling which I doubt not all must have, who are dedicating any portion of their youth to the bright service of the Muse.

It is also on this ground—and in the belief that you recognize a Brotherhood in Art—extending to its humblest followers—that I will not refrain from tendering to you the Verses enclosed—written as they purport to be—immediately on perusal of the Memoir, and which (though I wish they were a worthier tribute) I would have ventured to address to you at the time, but for the reason indicated by the tenor of the earlier part of this communication.

The theme however, thank God—even amid the noise of Continental strife—filling men's ear's to-day—and sometimes with a glorious echo too,—can never be one of temporary interest—and when leisure shall serve you to glance over the lines—you will I hope at least accept them as evidence of my *wish*—to bring some memorial to the Poet's shrine—and to thank you—in his name—now so touchingly associated with your own.—

I fear I am much to blame, for making this letter so long—at this late period of the Session especially, when business of a public nature, doubtless demands your attention.—I will trust to your goodness to excuse me, and with the assurance that you shall hear of me at all events once again,

I beg to remain,

Dear Sir,

Very gratefully and faithfully yours,

Sumner Jones.

R. M. Milnes Esq^r. M. P.
26 Pall Mall.

P. S. I wish to add one line to say, that I heard, and with how

much delight, your speech on Monday⁷ at the London Tavern, and your eloquent appeal to us on behalf of the heart-stirring Hungarian Cause!⁸ As I see too your name inserted among those who have consented to receive subscriptions for the brave refugees at Folkestone, I trust there is no impropriety in my enclosing half-a-sovereign in this letter for them, as from S. J.—if you will let me take the liberty of handing it to you thus,—and subscriptions as small I believe have been received. Surely the “Stars in their courses will fight against”⁹—Austria.—S. J.

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SUMNER JONES: SONNETS TO R. M. MILNES

July¹⁰ 1849

On reading the
Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of
John Keats.
(Edited by Richard Monckton Milnes)

I.

We knew—with Gods on their Olympian heights,
Converse he held as in his native clime;
Through Vallies of Old Greece thick-blown with thyme,

⁷ July 23. Next day *The Times* asserted that the speeches made by Cobden, Milnes, and other “enthusiasts” against Austria and Russia “deceive those only whom they profess to aid.”

⁸ Milnes addressed to Lord Lansdowne his pamphlet on *The Events of 1848* (1849), which dealt with the Russian invasion of Hungary. See Reid, I, 419, 451, II, 441, who gives no information about the refugees.

⁹ Judges 5:20.

¹⁰ Somewhat earlier than the preceding letter, in which they were enclosed.

III.

The Inscription.

"One whose name was writ in Water."

Life, Letters, & Remains, Vol 2. page 91.

Yes! Thou bright Bard! but ineffaceably,
 And *not* as *thou* didst deem in thy despair.
 Thy name? The Cataract from his heaven-cleft lair,
 Leaps with it into light baptizingly,
 Like thy young Spirit trumpet-toned and free!—
 —Nor ever shall a brother-poet fare
 By gentler streams to muse, but he shall share
 His pensive thoughts with memories of thee!—

Ay—and those deeper, holier founts, whose source,
 Doth underlie our life of hopes and fears;
 For thee shall spring,—and generous remorse,
 O'er the sad story of thy few bright years,
 Prophetic make those words of thine—and force
 Frequent, the flow of no ignoble *tears*.

S.J.

IV.

(A final impression from the Volumes.)

Strike down the pedestals—then see who stands,
 And dub him famous!—So the World cries out,
 Self-urged to that most blind and envious shout,
 By its own baseness;—Keats! for thee OUR hands
 Are not so raised; we rather point what heights
 Thy wings were aim'd at—deem thy thought comprized
 New pathway through the Heaven of *Mind*—devized
 For wondrous traverse of thy *after-flights*!

Thou did'st serve Beauty well—and the high need
 Of Truth being thine—years would have brought thy hour
 To be Her Champion;—be it then their heed
 So-call'd, to-day, to see thee—not in bower
 Reclined,—but rearing thy swift-wingèd Steed
 To rouse the World with thunderous snorts of power!
 S.J.

» 257 «

BENJAMIN BAILEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

13 August 1849

Printed in part by Blunden, pp. 210-212.

Ceylon. . August 13. 1849.

My dear Friend—

It is very long since you and I exchanged a letter, though I have often thought of you—more I dare say than you have of me— Especially since the publication of Mr Monckton Milnes' life & letters of poor dear John Keats,—in which I am so unceremoniously sent to my account before my time. I received one evening, just I think a year ago, or thereabouts,—two numbers of the *Athenæum*, with a note from my friend Sir James Emerson Tennent,¹ our Colonial Secretary, in which *Athenæum*, to my pleasure and surprise, I found notices of Mr Milnes' book.—I was rather amused with the account of my own death, tho' my feelings were not unindued with melancholy to reflect how lapse of time and change of place takes one so wholly out of the memory & knowledge of our former friends and acquaintance as to make us, to all intents & purposes, *really* dead. But all personal considerations were and are merged in the

¹ Politician and author (1804–1869). See II, 265.

heartfelt satisfaction that Keats' genius and memory were, however tardily, at last done justice to. I lost no time in writing to Mr Milnes. I found, however, I had been anticipated by our Auditor Gen^l Mr Macarthy,² the brother in law of Mr Hawes, the under-sec^y for the Colonies.³ I promised Mr Milnes a paper of Reminiscences for his second Edition; and I sent him a long letter (copied out by my married daughter with whom I am now living)⁴ by the May Mail, in the Gov'.⁵ Bag, though I have not yet received advice of its receipt. I have had one letter from Mr Milnes, who, moreover, sent me a Copy of the Work.—Time and many & severe afflictions had so worn out the recollection of when I had disposed of Keats's letters that nothing surprised me more than to see so many of my own letters, which I thoroughly recognized, and then remembered that, at your request, I had given them to you⁵ for the purpose to which they are now appropriated. But I thought *you* were to be the Biographer. Mr Milnes tells the rest of the story; and it was my first intelligence of Brown's adventurous Emigration to New Zealand.—Respecting my own death, a letter of my brother's contradicting it, went the round of the Calcutta papers. Milnes told me he could not distinctly recollect how he received the impression of my death; but he thought that he was told it by poor Mrs Hood (Jane Reynolds)⁶ who, poor creature, is herself now dead. How was it that Hood died so poor? His writings must have realized an immense sum of money.—

I wish you would write to me, and give me some intelligence of my old friends (30 years ago and upwards). I have

² See II, 312, and Reid, I, 380n.

³ Sir Benjamin Hawes (1797–1862) was made under-secretary on July 6, 1846. He was transferred on October 31, 1851, to the war department, of which he was permanent under-secretary from 1857 till his death.

⁴ No. 253.

⁵ See I, 243f.

⁶ See No. 348.

written to Reynolds, but have as yet received no answer. Tell me about him and his sisters.

I have an opportunity of sending this in a letter of a friend, or I had perhaps not written. Another object I have in writing respects another deceased author of no mean name and fame, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. I am in correspondence with his highly accomplished daughter Sara Coleridge, the widow of Nelson Coleridge, who has taken up her husband's pen, as the Editor of her gifted father's works, and worthy of the office has she proved herself. I sent her copies of some papers, contributed <to an Indian Periodical> by my dear friend the late Chief Justice of Ceylon, Sir W. Rough,⁷ and myself to an Indian Publication, on the death of her Poet-and-Philosopher-father. I have had a very nice letter in reply, requesting my permission to allow them to be printed in the next Edⁿ of the *Biographia Literaria*, which she has now made so interesting a Work.⁸ Admirer as I am of Coleridge, I do not, as you know, agree in all his opinions; and I have in fairness mentioned my objections to some of his theological dogmas, such as his denial of the *human birth* of Christ, according to S^t Luke and S^t Matthew,—and his allegorizing of the Mosaic account of the Fall in the *Aids*, first published by you.⁹ May I once more ask, if you have a spare copy of my [?] Book on the Parables,¹⁰ in which my objection is noticed in full, and which I see no reason to withdraw, send one to M^{rs} Nelson Coleridge, 10 Chester Place, Regent's Park.—You would really oblige me if you could do this; or, if you have not

⁷ See II, 264.

⁸ He refers to the second edition (3 vols., 1847) "prepared for publication in part by the late Henry Nelson Coleridge [1798–1843] completed and published by his widow" (1802–1852). Mrs. Coleridge got out no further edition.

⁹ See I, 281n.

¹⁰ *An Exposition of the Parables of Our Lord* (1828). See Blunden, p. 100.

a spare copy left, if you could send one as a loan to her address; for I suppose you must know her.—all I can do in return is to request your acceptance of two copies (for which I will inclose an open letter to Rodwell) ¹¹ of a little Book of mine intituled "*The Churchman's Manual*"—a reprint of the old "Godly Prayers" of the Reformers, printed in the old Prayer Bks, and some prayers of Jer. Taylor. It is chiefly curious as a beautiful specimen of printing at Bp's College Calcutta, where this Edⁿ was printed.—Some friends requested me to send a few Copies to England.—

Tell me how Time and the world treat you; whether you keep your health pretty well; and whether you yet live in "single blessedness." I have now been a widower 17½ years of the 18 years since I left Portsmouth for India. I have 3 grandchildren, and am now on leave of 18 mo^s for my health which of late years has suffered a good deal. I would retire from my Chaplaincy if I could get a decent provision, for which I must yet wait. I am Archdeacon, but without any emolument.—Farewell, my dear Friend, and believe me Ever Yours,

B Bailey.

Address me as Archdⁿ Bailey, *Colombo*,

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BENJAMIN BAILEY TO R. M. MILNES

11 September 1849

Ceylon

Ratnapoora. Sep. 11. 1849.

My dear Sir

I received your brief but friendly letter from Mr Macar-

¹¹ Doubtful name, but presumably John Rodwell (Rodwell and Martin), 46 New Bond Street and 40 Argyle Street, who published Bailey's *Poetical Sketches* in 1831.

thy,¹ and had not intended to have troubled you with more than a message of thanks through your friend, but that I afterwards received by the overland conveyance the valuable present of your four Volumes of Poems. I am much obliged to you for them, and am sure that I shall derive much pleasure from them. For I have not had time to do more than look through them. I had read your "Palm Leaves" which has been recently ordered for the Colombo United Service Libry—a very good one. But I am much more interested in your "poems of many years," and "many scenes." Your lot has been a favoured one to be able to go into "many scenes" in youth and strong² manhood, when the mind is in vigour and the taste healthy. Among English scenes I observe you have visited *Olney*, poor Cowper's melancholy residence and have fitly memorialized it. I was once Rector of *Gayhurst* and Stoke Goldington, close by, and mentioned in the poet's beautiful letters.—Accidentally, too, I find you were a contributor to Blackwood of some of your poems. I was so disgusted with that publication by the event I have detailed, in 1818, in my letter to you of Keats, that I never took that publication, and rarely have read it. But it is full of talent.

I have now only to remark your communication respecting the obstacles to an early reprint of your Keats. I deeply regret that such feelings should exist in the breasts of any of Keats's friends. I cannot but esteem them most uncalled for. I can understand, as I believe I remarked to Mr MacCarthy, that "the King of Cockayne" may be unwilling to part with so good a subject as Keats; but I cannot sympathise with the impulses of Vanity. You were not only perfectly justified in freeing Keats

¹ Charles (later Sir Charles) J. MacCarthy, an intimate friend of Milnes, late in 1847 went to Ceylon as (see the *Royal Kalendar* [1848], p. 465) auditor, accountant-general, and comptroller of revenue. According to Reid, II, 42, Milnes was responsible for his appointment in 1859 as governor of Ceylon. Compare with this letter Bailey's letter of August 13, to Taylor, preceding.

² Others read this word as *during or through!*

from the Cockney-School; but you would not, in my apprehension, have been justified, had you not done so.

I hope, however, ere long, that you will, maugre Leigh Hunt, publish a new edition; and you must have many desirable additional materials. I am glad you are satisfied with what I sent you,—of which, as I then said, you are perfectly at liberty to make as much, or as little, use as you please. When you publish a new edⁿ, I hope I may presume on being favoured with a copy. I hope that Reynolds, and none other of K's friends, have foolishly taken umbrage at your book.—

As to my reported death, the Americans are most welcome to it. Dead or alive, I am of no importance to them. I agree with you it had been an *Euthanasia*, had I shared Keats's early grave. But I am fast travelling thither.

I have seen very little of your friend Mr Macarthy. My health was so bad when he arrived, & sometime after, that I rarely went out; and I have been continuously absent from Colombo for the far longer³ time he has lived there.

Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Very cordially yours,

B Bailey.

»» 259 ««

VERSES ON BENJAMIN BAILEY'S ALLEGED DEATH⁴

1849 (?)

Dicky Milnes—Dicky Milnes! why what the deuce could ail ye
When you wrote the life of Keats—to write the death of Bailey—
The poet sleeps—oh! let him sleep—within the silent tomb—o
But Parson Bailey lives, and kicks—Archdeacon of Colombo—

³ *Perhaps* larger.

⁴ Originally attached to the preceding letter, though probably written in 1848.

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MRS. SARAH HELEN POWER WHITMAN ¹ TO MRS. ALLEN

26 November 1853

November 26th/53

Dear Mrs Allen

On my return from a walk last evening I found your charming gifts. You could not have sent them to one who would have prized them more

To me they are all beautiful, and all are fraught with cherished associations, but more especially I value the flowers from the graves of Keats and Shelley.

I have often wished for a single blade of that "Coarse grass" that grows by the grave of Keats or for a leaf of one of the wild roses that used to bloom by the monument of Shelley. Accept my warmest thanks & believe me

Yours with sincere regard

Sarah H Whitman

»» 261 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

20 December 1853

Blunden, p. 220, quotes a few words.

Bournemouth Dec 20/53

My dear Taylor

My best thanks for the Sonnets you kindly sent me. I had forgotten the "Nile" ¹ entirely—the other is quite perfect. I see

¹ Poetess (1803–1878) of Providence, Rhode Island, and Poe's Helen. On her interest in Keats see *Keats' Reputation*, pp. 53f., 75. Mrs. Allen is unidentified.

¹ See No. 291.

how the alteration or omission of a Word or two will spoil a carefully written Poem— I had forgotten the words “for days” in the seventh line of “The Sea” filling up their place with some adverbial epithet which quite marred its effect.² Are there more of his unpublished pieces in your hands, or were they given to Monckton Milnes? I always regretted that you did not take Keats’s Name & Fame in hand. You & Woodhouse knew more of him than any one, and you might have made a very interesting Book of his Memoirs. Even now, you might, I should think do something with the materials Woodhouse left you. When you are quite at leisure Copy out for me, if you please, your two Sonnets³ on Sherwood Forest—but do it at any time when it may be convenient to you. I suppose this will find you if I direct it to Kensington—though I fear you will not be at Frank’s, as I find he has Mr Grant & Robert with him—the latter is coming to us some time this week—the former is on his way to the west, where I hope he will locate himself comfortably. I trust you will find your new home a pleasant one, and that you will have no cause to regret leaving the old house where you have spent so many years. I don’t like these rootings up, but they are sometimes necessary, and when the trouble of moving is over, I dare say you will feel, as we often do, that the change is an improvement. It will be pleasant for you if Mr Knott settles at Kensington—you will have one old friend, who will always be glad to come & see you. Will you send me, some time or other, a Copy of your Opium Eater? I believe you can send Manuscript Books by post as well as printed ones— I had a letter from the Post Office some time since containing the Regulations, which I believe allow MSS. to pass— I gave it to the Post Master here, who had not had any orders sent him, and

² In the *Champion*, August 17, 1817, line 7, “Be moved for days,” was printed “Be lightly moved.”

³ Apparently unknown.

he has mislaid it: but you can learn at the Post Office. We all continue quite well, tho' the weather has been extremely cold—We have even had some snow—a rarity in these parts. Should you like to send a MS. Book by post? The Postmasters are empowered and enjoined to open Book Packets to see if there be any thing like a letter contained in them; and it would not be pleasant to have private Books so examined. I have always lamented that there was no Memoir of poor Hilton— His beautiful, retiring, amiable character, and his decided genius, would form a nice subject, and it is a thousand pities that such a man should have had no record of him preserved. You might, with the assistance of his Sister, do him that Justice. You see I am chalking out amusement for you in your leisure. Christmas is at hand—may it pass happily with you and be followed by many happy returns— We all unite in kindest regards

Your affectionate Friend

J. A. Hessey

J. Taylor Esq

I sent to Mr Grant long ago the notice Mr Strong⁴ <sent> gave me about Penzance—it was only the name of a Person concerned in the letting of houses at Penzance

»» 262 ««

E. L. LUSHINGTON¹ TO R. M. MILNES

29 December 1856

Eastbourne Dec^r 29—56

My dear Milnes

Before I received your letter I had copied out a good part

⁴ See II, 476n.

¹ Lushington (1811–1893), one of the Cambridge "Apostles," was a Glasgow professor and a brother-in-law of Tennyson.

of my copy of *Hyperion* for you, & I hope now to complete & send it you within a few days. If you are preparing a new Edition of Keats² I hope the beautiful little poem of 'La Belle Dame Sans Mercy'³ which I first saw in Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*⁴ & have always missed from the Collected works of Keats, may not be forgotten.

I heartily thank you for your kind wishes, & trust there may be nothing to mar the happiness of your Xmas

Ever y^r sincerely

E L Lushington

»» 263 ««

VALENTIN AND FANNY KEATS LLANOS¹ TO R. M. MILNES

25 March 1859

Valladolid 25th March 1859.

My dear Sir,

On the publication of your Work, "the Life of John Keats," you had the kindness to send to M^r Dilke two copies² of it to be forwarded to us. These, for want of opportunity, did not reach us till more than two years after; but on our receiving them, we wrote thanking you for your welcome and grateful present. Not wishing to trust our letter to the post, we availed ourselves of the opportunity of a gentleman going over to London who offered to deliver it to you personally; but finding you were out of town at the time he happened to be there, he put the

² Instead Milnes printed *The Fall of Hyperion—A Dream* in *Biographical & Historical Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society* (1856-1857).

³ It is in Milnes, II, 268-270.

⁴ May 10, 1820.

¹ In the hand of Llanos, who wrote at the bottom of the first page: "Richard Monckton Milnes Esq^{re}." The letter is summarized by Adami, p. 152.

² See II, 251.

letter in the post, and from the circumstance of our never having heard more of it, we infer it was lost.

Having been more than once on the point of going over to England, we have delayed writing to you again; but finding, much to our regret, that the promised pleasure of making your acquaintance, and of personally thanking you will be delayed for the present, we profit of the opportunity which now offers of sending these few lines to you through the medium of our particular friend Don Leopoldo Brockmann,³ who will at the same time take charge of a painting of our son John, which is a copy of a *Purísima* of Murillo that is in the Museum of Painting of Madrid, one of the best specimens of the ideal beauty of that great master, and which we beg you will accept as a small token of gratitude from the nephew of the Poet whose genius, moral character, and domestic virtues you have so justly and accurately appreciated and recorded.

As the friend who is the bearer of this letter, and of the picture, will remain but a very few days in London, it is not unlikely that his occupations may prevent him from delivering them personally to you; but he will take care they reach your hands. We shall, however, feel greatly obliged by your favoring us with a line acknowledging their receipt, directing your letter to this City, as follows—S^r Dⁿ Valentin Llanos—Valladolid, where we shall be most happy to see you, should you at any time make a visit to this country.

Please to accept the assurance of our most affectionate regards, and to believe us,

Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

Valentin Llanos

Frances Llanos⁴

³ Count Leopold Brockmann became the husband of the Llanos' second daughter, Isabel (Adami, p. 144).

⁴ Apparently signed by her.

» 264 «

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE: RECOLLECTIONS OF KEATS

1860 (?)¹

I can scar[c]ely conceive of anything more unjust than the account which that ill-ordered being, Haydon, the artist,² left behind him in his "Diary," respecting the idolized object of his former intimacy, John Keats. After having read the manuscript specimens that I had left with Leigh Hunt, at Haydon's own request, I³ introduced their author to him; and for some time subsequently, I had <frequent> perpetual⁴ opportunities of seeing them together, and can testify to the laudations that Haydon trowelled on to the young poet. Before I left London,

¹ This long manuscript was apparently the copy used for the chapter called "Recollections of John Keats" in Clarke's and Mary Clarke's *Recollections of Writers* (1878), pp. 120-157. The brief section here printed but omitted from the book occurs just before the paragraph beginning in the book (p. 150), "When Shelley left England." The "Recollections," however, had long before been printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1861 (VII, 86-100). The Haydon passage is included in the *Atlantic* (A), pp. 97f., but with numerous changes, indicated below in footnotes.

In its second paragraph the manuscript professes to have been written "sixty-odd years" (changed to "seventy-odd") later than the events it narrates, whereas the *Atlantic* reads "nearly sixty years," the *Recollections* "seventy odd years." The "Recollections" was printed again in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1874 (n.s., XII, 177-204), and thence in *Littell's Living Age*, April, 1874 (CXXI, 174-188), and *Every Saturday*, March 7, 1874 (n.s., I, 262-270). All three contain the Haydon passage with some slight changes. F. W. Haydon replied to Clarke in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, May, 1874 (n.s., XII, 508-510). On May 3, 1875, Clarke told Severn (Sharp, pp. 257f.) that he had been making additions to "the future edition of my 'Recollections.'"

² A omits the artist.

³ A At his own eager request, after reading the manuscript specimens I had left with Leigh Hunt, I had.

⁴ A frequent (not perpetual).

however, it had been said that things and opinions had changed, —and, in short, that having paid a certain visit to Edinburgh, Haydon had abjured all acquaintance with Leigh Hunt (the man, who all-but introduced him to the public in the *Examiner*; and whom I have heard him gaum with adulation); and moreover, that he had even ignored such a person as the author of Sonnets XIII & XIV "To Haydon." ⁵ I make no allusion to ⁶ the grounds of their separation,—having heard no word from either party; ⁷ but, knowing the two men, and knowing, I believe, to the core, the humane principle of the poet, I have such faith in his steadfastness of friendship, that I am sure *he* ⁸ would never have left behind him even ⁹ an unfavourable *truth*, while nothing could have induced him to utter a *calumny*—especially ¹⁰ of one who had received pledges of his former affectionate ¹¹ regard and esteem. Haydon's detraction was the more odious, because its object could not contradict the charge, and because it supplied his old critical antagonists (if any remained) with an authority for their charge against him of Cockney ostentation and display. The most mean-spirited and trumpery twaddle in the paragraph was, that Keats was so far gone in sensual excitement as to put Cayenne pepper upon his tongue, when taking his claret! In the first place, if the stupid trick ever were played, I have not the slightest belief in its serious sincerity. During my knowledge of him Keats never purchased a

⁵ For in short . . . "To Haydon" *A* has: in short, that Haydon had abjured all acquaintance with, and had even ignored, such a person as the author of the sonnet to him, and those "On the Elgin Marbles."

⁶ *A* I say nothing of.

⁷ *A* omits having . . . party.

⁸ No italics in *A*.

⁹ *A* omits.

¹⁰ *A* omits.

¹¹ *A* omits.

bottle of claret;¹² and, from such observation as could not escape me, I am bound to assert that his domestic expenses never could have occasioned him a regret or a self-reproof:¹³ and, lastly, I never perceived in him even a tendency to imprudent indulgence.

In recurring—after a lapse of so many years—to the above odious act of <scandal and (Back)> ingratitude in Haydon, I cannot but feel glad that the record of the scandal ※ (Back) did not reach me during the life of its promulgator; as I might have given way to a natural, if <not a> a non-magnanimous impulse of <revenge> reprisal.

※ NOTE.¹⁴

I am reminded upon this occasion,—and have exquisite pleasure in aptly quoting the following passage from the <last> recent production of the Author of “Friends in Council”;—“Animals and their Masters.” Page 25.—“Some girls were asked by one of our inspectors of schools, at a school examination, whether they knew what was the meaning of the word ‘scandal.’ One little girl stepped vigorously forward, and, throwing her hand up in that semaphore fashion by which children indicate the possession of knowledge, attracted the notice of the inspector. He desired her to answer the question; upon which she uttered these memorable words: ‘Nobody <knows> does nothing, and everybody goes on telling of it every where.’”¹⁵

¹² For In the first . . . of claret *A* has Poor fellow! he never purchased a bottle of claret, within my knowledge of him.

¹³ *A ends here.*

¹⁴ The note is written on the back of the sheet.

¹⁵ Sir Arthur Helps, *Some Talk about Animals and Their Masters* (1873), pp. 25f.

» 265 «

THORNTON HUNT TO R. M. MILNES

6 April 1861

17 Euston Square, N. W.
April 6, 1861.

My dear Sir

It has been suggested to me that, as Keats's literary executor, you may have in your possession letters of my father to our friend Keats or may know where to lay your hands on them. Is that so? And if it is, would you object to my having the loan of them?

As I said before, all letters I have are returned unaltered and undamaged in any way.

The collection which I have made <is def> so far, is deficient in some important sections, and any letters to Keats would be very welcome indeed.

Forgive me for troubling you a second time; but I feel sure you will look kindly on my desire to render the book as complete as possible.

Believe me to be,
my dear Sir,
your[s] most faithfully
Thornton Hunt.

Monckton Milnes, Esq., M. P.

» 266 «

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FREDERICK LOCKER ¹

28 April 1862

*Address (on a separate piece of paper pasted on the back of the letter):
To/ Frederick Locker Esq^r/ 31 Piazza de Spagna/ [Written in lower left
corner] J. Severn.*

Palazzo Poli Rome April 28
1862

Dear M^r Locker

I had the gratification to receive permission from Madam Keats Llanos to select for you a letter of the great Poet her brother—and now on my return I do so with pleasure, knowing how glad you will be to add it to your interesting collection. —That I have not done so before I crave your indulgence to believe that the sad events in which I have been absorbed, have been the sole cause

Yours very truly

Joseph Severn

To

Frederick Locker Esq^r

¹ Poet and book-collector (1821–1895), after 1885 named Locker-Lampson. The letter is written on mourning paper, because Severn's wife had died in Marseilles in April (Sharp, p. 255n.). In it was enclosed Keats's letter of April 17, 1819, to Fanny (*Letters*, pp. 294–296), which is now at Harvard.

» 267 «

JOSEPH SEVERN TO MRS. PHILIP SPEED ¹

1 September 1863

Address: United States America/ Major Philip Speed/ Lou[i]sville/ Kentucky/ for Mrs Speed/ [In lower left corner] J. Severn Rome. Printed with various "improvements" by J. G. Speed, *Letters of John Keats* (1883), pp. 316f., n., and by the editor (R. W. Gilder) of the *Century Magazine*, October, 1895 (L. 953f.).

Rome Sep^r 1st 1863

My dear Madam

This is a line to assure you that I am the "one devoted friend untill death" of you[r] illustrious relative "John Keats" & that it has gratified me highly to be addressed by you in consequence of your reading my essay "on the Vicissitudes of Keats's Fame" ²— As I had the happiness to meet his Sister here (Madam d'Llanos) after 45 years! ³ I trust it may be also my happiness to meet some others ⁴ of his family in Rome, where I am likely to remain all my life, & where I first came in his dear company in Nov^r 1820 & on his account—altho' on my part so mad a thing as it seemd at the time & was pronounced so by most of my f^{ds}; yet it was the best & perhaps the only step to insure my artistic career, which no doubt was watchd & blessed by this dear Spirit, for I remaind 20 years without returning to England & during that time the Patrons I most valued came to me as "the f^{ds} of Keats"— These have remained faithfull to me & to mine no doubt inspired by the revered name of the Poet.—The success of my family (3 sons & 3 daugh-

¹ See I, xcvi, II, 342n.

² In the *Atlantic Monthly*, XI (1863), 401-407; later reprinted in *Sharpe's London Magazine*, XXXIV (1869), 246-249.

³ Adami, p. 154, says he met Fanny Llanos on April 6, 1861.

⁴ *Speed reads news.*

ters) has turned on this. The chief of these Patrons I may mention is the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (William Gladstone)

At this moment I only know of two personal fth of the poet besides myself to be now living—M^r Charles Cowden Clark who is at Genoa (Villa Novello Strada alla Cava ⁵ Genoa) & M^r John Taylor (the Publisher) in Londo{n}.

It may be also that fth of yours m{ay} chance to be visiting Rome & in that case I beg you to give them a note to me

This quiet note I fear may find you in the midst of wars misery if! it ever finds you at all & I hope it may be the means of procuring me another dear letter from you or yours— Yours most truly

Joseph Severn

For M^{rs} Speed

»» 268 ««

LORD HOUGHTON TO SIR BERNARD BURKE ¹

29 July 1864 (?)

16. U. Brook Str.

July 29th

64 ²

Lord Houghton presents his Compts. to Sir Bernard Burke & sends him to-day by book-post a copy of the Table-Talk of Mr. Burke at Crewe Hall, taken down by Lady Crewe, Lady Houghtons grandmother.³

⁵ Speed reads Cara.

¹ Sir John Bernard Burke (1814–1892), Ulster king-of-arms and genealogist.

² The date looks like 1864, but Houghton's hand is so villainous that nobody could be sure. Possibly it is 1869. The letter has the embossed stamp of The Athenaeum, and is endorsed by Burke "Answered."

³ John Burke, genealogist (1787–1848); Frances Greville (died 1818), wife of John Crewe, first Baron Crewe of Crewe (1742–1829).

Lord Houghton writes on the other page an accurate account of his literary works, which Sir B. Burke may like to insert in the next edition of his *Peerage*.

His [*word illegible*]⁴ as M.P. for Pontefract for 25 years continuously—he is the author of <several> several volumes of Poems, which, in the earlier editions appeared under the names of, Poems of Many Years, Palm-Leaves &c. of the Life of the Poet Keats—of several political & literary pamphlets & <is> has been a frequent contributor to the Quarterly & Edinburgh reviews—he was raised to the Peerage—&—

»» 269 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO LORD HOUGHTON

28 September 1864

Most of the letter is quoted by Adami, pp. 167, 174, 190.

Rome Sep^r 28th 1864

Dear Lord Houghton

Altho the latest of your friends to congratulate & compliment you on your elevation to the Peerage; yet I trust you will receive my assurances of the pleasure I felt, more particularly as it was here where I first had the great advantage of your friendship

I learn with satisfaction that 'tis your Lordships intention to produce a new edition of Keats's life & no doubt you will correct the two errors so often noticed, to this purpose you will find two papers by M^r Cowden Clarke & myself in the "Atlantic Monthly, January 1861 & April 1863" the errors are

⁴ Possibly "His duty," or perhaps Houghton intended "His lordship was." His sketch in *Burke's Peerage* (1864), p. 594, has "His lordship, who had been M.P. for Pontefract, and is author of . . . was raised to the peerage, as Baron Houghton, 20 Aug. 1863."

you giving Keats, blue instead [of] *hazel eyes*, making his hair auburn instead of *light brown*¹ & naming him as the second son instead of *the first*²— You will find some recollections of the Poet from my pen, which have been so well appreciated that I am now calling up every thing I can about him & contemplate a work to be illustrated by my children as well as myself

Pray tell me if such a work would be to your purpose to combine with yours— I can promise no end of new & interesting matter as my memory presents every thing most vividly.— The question asked by M^r Moxon as to Madam de Llanos (Keats's sister) having letters &c I beg to answer that I have well examined them & cannot find any thing suited for publication as they are all addressed to a little girl & constrained in style³

With this opportunity I would beg a great favour of you for this very dear Lady, who is about to return to Spain to my severe loss for I have had the happiness of her charming society for 3 years as she has had some misfortunes in pecuniary affairs consequent on her family efforts for there are two nephews & two nieces of the Poet; it now occurs to me that thro your great kindness (which I know so well) a pension might be obtained for her as the Sister of the illustrious Poet & also as the only remaining member of his family— Lord Palmerston would certainly incline to any such request from you as you are the eloquent biographer of the Poet & a distinguished Poet yourself

Your Lordships

most faithful S^r

Joseph Severn

To the R^t Hon^{ble}

Lord Houghton

¹ See II, 157n.

² See II, 250.

³ Forty-eight of these famous and beautiful letters are printed in *Letters*.

»» 270 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO LORD HOUGHTON

1867¹

Dear Lord Houghton

I am right well pleasd with your new Keats 'tis beautifully printed, you have made some good changes & I like its being in one vol—with the Poetry for the 2^d Vol

I conclude that you will have the portrait as in the first edition also the autofacsimile²

The vol shall be put into a beautifull Roman vellum binding if you kindly intend it for me, but I fear that you will be in need of it however tell me about the portrait, for I will wait for it before binding the vol

I have had still greater pleasure than ever in dwelling on this admirable work which I cannot but think will become a British Classic. *if it is not now?*

Yours very truly

Joseph Severn

P. S.

Miss O'Brien

29 Via Babuino 2. piano

Mr Lecky now here is not the author of any work

¹ Acknowledging the proofsheets of Milnes, 1867, a prefatory "Note" in which promises an edition of the poems "to be printed uniform with this volume." Embossed with the British seal, as is No. 271.

² Houghton used a different portrait for the 1867 volume (see note 1 to the following letter) and omitted the "Fairy's Song" facsimile.

»» 271 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO LORD HOUGHTON

23 March 1868¹

Dear Lord Houghton

It occurs to me to tell you that on my going to England in 1841 a small edition of Keats had just been published with a very bad portrait from a draw² by Hilton— It was not only not like Keats, but it made a sneaking fellow of him

Do let me intreat you to see well that this said portrait does not spoil your work— Keats himself thought that Hilton had some spite at him in this draw²

Yours truly

J. Severn

Pal² Poli Mon March 23^d

»» 272 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO LORD HOUGHTON

26 October 1869

Rome 26 Oct^r 1869

Dear Lord Houghton

a Roman line to remind you that you have to send me

¹ Monday was March 23 in 1868. Severn, who had seen only proofsheets, did not know that Milnes, 1867, actually had as a frontispiece the Hilton portrait which he here denounced, and which was first used in William Smith's edition of Keats in Smith's Standard Library, 1841 (see Williamson, p. 102). When, however, Moxon reissued in 1869, as a volume uniform with Milnes, 1867, *The Poetical Works of John Keats. With a Memoir, by Lord Houghton*, the frontispiece was the old Severn portrait Milnes had used in 1848. See II, 97n., and compare Mrs. Procter's comments on Hilton (No. 192).

² Palazzo.

Keats portrait good or bad, I mean to insert in the Vol you presented me ¹

I am amused that you are still *afraid* to give Keats *hazle eyes* ² altho you have every proof, not only from my portrait but also from the descriptions of his personal f^a— Do you know that there are persons who do [not] see colours correctly? aye & *even forms*.—that M^r Hogg who attempted the life of Shelley could not distinguish the male from the female statues—& he gave great offence to the sculptors with the question “is this male or female— In his book on Rome the Titian (Sacred & Profane Love) is described as “Christ & the Samaritan woman at the well” ³

Professor Brewster ⁴ de[s]cribed the “colour blindness” minutely—also I have experienced that there are persons who cannot see perspectives & may I venture to assert that I think persons may sometimes be found who cannot distinguish personalities except from *the voice*)

How you’ll laugh at my tirade but I can assure [you] tis founded in facts

Another promised favour I beg to remind [you] of—Your 2^d Volume ⁵ of Keats & Ill have ’em put into a splendid Roman binding of Vellum

¹ The proofsheets of Milnes, 1867: see No. 271. (Severn’s letter has the engraved seal of “British Consulate Rome.”)

² See II, 157f.

³ In *Two Hundred and Nine Days; or, The Journal of a Traveller on the Continent*, II (1827), 15f., Hogg tells of a morning spent at the Borghese palace, where “I greatly admired a fine Titian, Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well.” See II, 130. Hogg’s error had earlier been pointed out in J. P. Cobbett’s *Journal of a Tour in Italy* (1830), p. 278.

⁴ Sir David Brewster (1781–1868), natural philosopher, principal of Edinburgh University. See his *Treatise on Optics* (Philadelphia, 1833), pp. 259–261, 322f., and Margaret B. Gordon, *The Home Life of Sir David Brewster* (2d ed., 1870), pp. 172f.

⁵ The poems promised in Milnes, 1867.

You delighted me with your eloquent & generous tribute to poor old Hunt⁶ the real admiration of whom was almost confined to "*Noi altre due*"

I am glad to be able to tell you of my recovery from rheumatism & to the return of tiptop health such as I have not had for years

How I am rejoiced at the success of my illustrious f^d W^m Gladstone & that now he will be able to attack the system of the enormous European armaments

Here we are all "straining on the start" of the great Council

With my Compliments to Lady Houghton I remain

Yours truly

Joseph Severn

To Lord Houghton

»» 273 ««

W. A. LONGMORE TO LORD HOUGHTON

16 December 1870

1 Queens terrace
South Hackney
Dec^r 16 1870.

My Lord,

Having lately read your Lordships "Life & letters of John Keats," I find that you have inserted at page 9—a sonnet on Spenser, the date of which you say that you have not been able to trace⁷— Now it happens that I have preserved, as a

⁶ Presumably the passage that also appeared in Milnes, I, 194-197.

⁷ "Spenser! a jealous honourer of thine," which has no variants from the text Milnes (I, 11) printed in 1848. Later (see Nos. 275 and 281) Longmore sent him the autograph first draft of the sonnet, which Keats dated February 5, 1818. That autograph is now in Harvard's

relic of former times, what I believe to be the original Manuscript of the sonnet in question, and I beg to enclose to your lordship a copy of the same— The original was given to me about 25 years ago by my late mother, who was one of the sisters of J. H. Reynolds, and who I recollect told me that it was given to her by John Keats himself, who wrote it at her fathers house in Little Britain—

I was rather surprised to see it in print, as it has not been out of my possession, nor has any one had a copy of it until the one I now enclose—

I remain,
Your Obedient Serv^t

W. A. Longmore—

The Lord Houghton—
D. C L. &c

»» 274 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO LORD HOUGHTON

8 June 1873

Rome 8th June 1873

Dear Lord Houghton

I have just received the Photo from my drawing of Keats & Mr James Fields of Boston tells me that he sent one to you which ought to have come to me, but I am glad that we both

Dumbarton Oaks library, and Longmore's transcript is in the Harvard Keats Collection. Garrod has a series of conflicting remarks on the date. He says that (p. lxxviii) Mrs. Longmore "deciphered the date as 5 February 1818," and that 1816 is "quite as probable as 1814"; that the sonnet "concerns Miss Reynolds; and in March 1816 Keats did not know the Reynoldses"; that (p. 476) Mrs. Longmore *wrote* the date February 5, 1818, on the autograph MS.; and, in his *Keats* (2d ed., 1939), p. 146, that it was written on February 4, 1818.

possess this striking likeness, for I am much pleased with this remembrance of the Illustrious Poet & dear Friend & I assure you it is a most agreeable surprise as I had forgotten it ¹

Your charming new edition a copy of which you gave [me] when you were last in Rome & I confess I have been always longing for the intire work which was to comprise the Poems in a 2^d Volume ²

But as you were in doubt about the Portrait I wrote to M^r Fields, (for my gifted daughter M^{rs} Newton thought this sketch quite an inspiration) & I am rejoiced to find it quite as good as the likeness <on> (the front face) engraved in your life & regarded as excellent by all the old personal friends

M^r Dilke used to tell me that he frequently took down the book on purpose to gossip with Keats in this vivid remembrance

Now pray tell me why the work has not appeard

A beautiful poem was sent me (author unknown) on the subject of my friendship intituled "the last day of Keats

"Be still my heart, aye soon thou wilt be still"
have you seen it & do you know who wrote it? ³

I am glad to tell you that I am quite recovered from the 6 years rheumatism which usurped my hands & feet, this at

¹ J. T. Fields, the Boston publisher, wrote to Severn on May 15, 1871 (Sharp, p. 273): "I will with very great pleasure have a photograph of that drawing of Keats, which you kindly made for me, taken and sent wherever you direct. You do not say in your note whether it shall be sent to you or Lord Houghton. Your daughter is right; the sketch is indeed admirable." Apparently the drawing is unknown to Williamson. It is reproduced, from the Harvard Keats Collection, as the frontispiece to Blanche Colton Williams' *Forever Young* (1943).

² See II, 328n., 330n.

³ The entire poem, still anonymous, is printed from an album by W. H. Harrison in the *University Magazine*, October, 1878 (n.s., II, 433f.).

my age (soon 80) is indeed an unlookd for blessing and I am pursuing my painting with zest & freedom

Yours truly

Joseph Severn

to the R^t Hon^{ble}
Lord Houghton

»» 275 ««

W. A. LONGMORE¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

2 January 1875

Brighton Villa
Church Hill
Walthamstow
Jan^y 2nd 1875

My Lord,

I have much pleasure in enclosing for your inspection the John Keats Sonnet—it has been for many years fastened into a Scrap book, & finding some difficulty in detaching it I have torn out the leaf which I now forward—

On the back of the same leaf was a note from Charles Lamb to my uncle Thos. Hood, which I have taken off—

I have only to add that the enclosed is at your Lordships service for the time you think sufficient for its examination—when perhaps you will be so good as to return it, altho', being only a *poor Architect*, perhaps I might be induced to part with it, if you think it worth while to make me an offer for it—

I should mention that the words John Keats in the corner are in my mothers writing—

I am, My Lord

Yours obediently

W A Longmore

The Lord Houghton.

¹See Nos. 273 and 281.

» 276 «

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: NOTES ¹ ON LORD HOUGHTON'S
BIOGRAPHYJanuary 1875 (?) ²

Notes on Lord Houghton's life of John Keats.

Preface:—page IX. “Generous protector.” These words are perhaps not borne out by the facts. Charles Brown was very far from being well off and he certainly never spent money on Keats. When John Keats died M^r Brown sent in an account to George Keats for Board, money lent, and interest, of £72, which was paid. There was nothing improper in this but it is inconsistent with the phrase “generous protector.” Brown was a scrupulously honest man, but by no means a noble one. Again when Brown furnished Keats with the plot of the tragedy “Otho,” it was on the condition of half-profits, and as Brown turned everything he could of Keats manuscript into money in the *New Monthly Magazine* there are two or three phrases with regard to the relations between him & Keats which I venture to submit should be modified.

At Preface. page XI. M^r Ollier, is spoken of as an “enlightened publisher,” & impliedly as a friend of Keats. Now the let-

¹ A fragment of one folio and two octavo leaves, numbered respectively 1 and 1 and 2.

² Dilke based these notes on Milnes, 1848 (drawing on the annotations in his grandfather's copy [see I, lxix n.]), evidently with the idea of improving the new memoir in preparation for *Aldine* (1876). His offer “to shew you *her* [Fanny Brawne's] letters” fixes the date of the notes as earlier than his letter of February 6, 1875.

ter which I published in the *Athenæum*,³ I think taken in conjunction with one or two of Keats own letters about Ollier, would <I think> justify the modification of one or two passages about Ollier.

Page 4. George was not older, but younger than John. The order was John, George, Thomas, Fanny; with about 2 years between each of them, but this would be settled by a letter to M^{rs} Llanos (Fanny) who is living in Madrid. This alters phrase "Elder Brother" on *page 5*

Page 9. There is <as> a good deal of doubt as to whether the money was as much as £8,000. M^{rs} Llanos

* * *

Brown at various times had many people to live with him besides Keats. Not any of them ever lived with him for nothing; And indeed his main object in having them to live with him was to eke out his small income.

The next time you call on me ask me to shew you *her* letters.

I have a memorandum by my Grandfather that when George Keats gave him full powers to treat for the copyright of his Brother's works, He (George) expressed himself as being most anxious to bring out a handsome Edition, even at the risk of sacrificing its cost.⁴

* * *

³ On June 7, 1873, p. 725, Sir Charles printed a letter of April 29, 1817, to George Keats, wherein C. and J. Ollier bitterly complain of the badness and unsalability of Keats's *Poems*. See also *Letters*, pp. 101f., n., Colvin, p. 133, Lowell, I, 312, and Hewlett, p. 96.

⁴ See II, 23f.

» 277 «

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE TO LORD HOUGHTON

January 1875 (?)¹

76. Sloane Street. S. W.

Dear Lord Houghton

I have the original bill for 75£ with the details—claimed against George Keats—by Brown in 1826 & paid by my grandfather

This scrap² is from Jane Reynolds afterwards M^{rs} Thomas Hood—to my grandmother. I quite agree with it.

Y^{rs}

Charles W. Dilke

» 278 «

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE TO LORD HOUGHTON

6 February 1875

76. Sloane Street. S. W.

Dear Lord Houghton

I quite agree with you about the love letters¹ As for the notes on Milton do you want more than appeared in the

¹ Written after the Notes preceeding. Dilke is merely backing up his assertion that Brown charged Keats for board.

² Evidently Miss (Jane?) Reynolds' note to Mrs. Dilke (*Papers*, I, 11): "I hear that Keats is going to Rome, which must please all his friends on every account. . . . and absence may probably weaken, if not break off, a connexion that has been a most unhappy one for him."

¹ Of Keats to Fanny Brawne: see I, xlix, II, 353f.

Athenæum² because those notes with the corrections were mine and are exact?

Y^{rs} very truly

Charles W Dilke

Feb: 6/75

» 279 «

WILLIAM DILKE³ TO SIR CHARLES W. DILKE

15 February 1875 (?)⁴

My dear Charles,

My recollection of Miss Brawn as a girl agrees with your grand-mothers description. She was of a very sallow complexion not a lady with whom a Poet so sensitive as John Keats would be likely to fall in love. Your grandfather would probably say she made the advances to him without really caring much for him.—She did not accompany him to Italy which she might have done with her brother when Keats went there as a last resource for his health—

I say thus much as you ask for it but perhaps it would be scarcely well to say so much to Lord Houghton.

I sent a letter to you last Evening directed to Stratford Place

Ever yours

W. D.

Febr^y 15.

² Keats's annotations on Milton (the book itself is now in the Keats Museum) were printed in the issue of October 26, 1872, pp. 529f., and reprinted by Forman, III, 18-30. See *Keats' Reputation*, p. 125.

³ Sir Charles's great-uncle.

⁴ For the date compare the three numbers preceding. In *Papers*, I, 11, 34, Sir Charles does not mention the name Brawne, but makes an unkind remark about "the woman he [Keats] had loved" (see I, xlviii). Keats's "passion for Miss Brawn" was discussed in *Aldine*, pp. xxv f., xxviii.

»» 280 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO MRS. JOHN W. FIELD ¹

19 March 1875

Dear M^{rs} Field

Your charming party was a gratification to me which I shall hold long in remembrance

I should so much like to know the gifted Miss Crawford whose interesting works I saw at your house

Yours obliged

Joseph Severn

Scala Dante

Fri March 19^h 1875

¹ Much information about John W. Field and Mrs. (Eliza W.) Field, of Philadelphia, is given in the *Letters* of their old friend Charles Eliot Norton (ed. Sara Norton and M. A. De Wolfe Howe, 1913). They lived abroad for years—as early as 1857 they were housed on the corner of the Piazza di Spagna, Rome (Norton, I, 159)—and collected various *objets d'art*. Presumably they commissioned Severn to paint an enlarged replica of his miniature of Keats (see II, 269, note 6). At any rate they owned such a painting, about 18 by 24 inches in size, inscribed "J. Severn Rome 1878 in his 84th year." Mrs. Field, who had a summer home near Norton's at Ashfield, a village not far from Williamstown, Massachusetts, presented her collection to Williams College in memory of her husband in 1887 (President Franklin Carter's *Report . . . 1888, To the Friends of the College*, p. 18). The Severn picture, which is reproduced as a frontispiece to the Student's Cambridge Edition (Boston, 1899) of Keats, hangs in the Art Museum (Lawrence Hall) of the College. See also the *Century Magazine*, February, 1906 (LXXI, 539n.).

» 281 «

W. A. LONGMORE ¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

20 March 1875

Brighton Villa
Church Hill
Walthamstow
E

Mar—20/75—

My Lord,

I shall be much obliged if you will return to me the Ms^t of John Keats which I forwarded to you in Jan^r last— I shall also be glad to hear, if not troubling you too much, whether you have been able to arrive at a satisfactory Conclusion as to the date &c—

I am
my Lord
Yours obed^{ly}

W A Longmore

Lord Houghton—

¹ See II, 331n. For Houghton's reply of April 6, enclosing the manuscript, see the *Harvard Library Bulletin*, I (1947), 96f.

» 282 «

GENERAL SIR VINCENT EYRE:¹ POEM ON KEATS23 March 1875 (?)²

Suggested by Severn's sketch of Keats
on his death bed.

'T was thus, amid the silent hours of night,
The dying Poet slept, long years ago;
Calm as "Endymion" 'neath the moon's soft glow;
Dreaming, perhaps, of worlds more pure and bright
Where he might lay aside his weight of woe!
And, as we gaze, he seems to fade from view
Like some pale meteor, melting in the light
Of dawning day, yet leaving sparks that strew
Its path through space; a legacy of love
To men below— E'en thus the setting sun,
Sinking from sight, darts lingering rays above,
Long after its diurnal course is run;
And thus doth Keats, though brief on earth his days,
Illumine still our minds with his undying lays!

V. E.

¹ Eyre (1811–1881), after a distinguished military career in India, retired from the Army in October, 1863, with the rank of Major-General. He then passed many of his winters in Rome, where he was a great favorite in society. In 1874 he published *Lays of a Knight-Errant in Many Lands*, which all too accurately he describes as a "volume of way-side warblings and random rhymes," "a medley of trivialities." See also Nos. 283, 290, 294, 300.

² The copy sent to Milnes is undated, but in another Eyre wrote on the back of a photograph of Severn's sketch (for which see Sharp, facing p. 84, and Williamson, facing p. 102), and presumably sent to James Freeman Clarke (it is now in Clarke's papers at Harvard), he added the date "Rome/ 23 March 1875." The Clarke copy is headed, "Sonnet—Sugge[s]ted," and so forth, has in line 13 "Thus, too, our KEATS" and apparently in line 14 the reading "Illumines," and differs somewhat in other trifling details, especially punctuation.

» 283 «

GENERAL SIR VINCENT EYRE¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

28 July 1875

54 Hans Place
28th July 1875

Dear Lord Houghton

I thank your Lordship very much for your kind note enclosing £4 for the Keats' medallion—

You will be glad to learn that it has been completed in marble by M^r Warrington Wood and I am daily hoping to receive from him a photograph of it. M^r Severn, who has seen it, is very much satisfied with it²— Since I left Rome a bust of

¹ See No. 282.

² In a pamphlet, *The Old Stones of Rome, A Lent Lecture in Verse & Prose Dedicated to the British & American Archaeological Society*, February 1, 1875, Eyre told of money sent him for the restoration of Keats' tomb by Miss Mary Frere, daughter of the statesman Sir Bartle Frere (1815–1884), of London, and by an American niece of the poet (Mrs. Philip Speed), and expressed his intention of raising further money for a bust of Keats to be set up somewhere in England and a medallion to be placed on the gate of the Protestant Cemetery in Rome. He also printed his acrostic poem beginning, "Keats! if thy cherished name be 'writ in water.'" Sarah Freeman Clarke reported Eyre's activities to Mrs. Speed on February 3 and April 7 (her very interesting letters of these dates plus an extract from Miss Frere's letter to Lady Eyre are printed in full in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 17, 1907. Miss Clarke's letter of April 7 had earlier been printed in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LV [1877], 360). Both the medallion and the poem have been severely criticized (for Wilde's opinion see No. 295). For example, Archbishop Trench, one of the Cambridge "Apostles," wrote Severn in 1881 (Sharp, p. 283n.): "Eyre's acrostic is so thoroughly artificial, and quâ acrostic so thoroughly out of place, that I have, I must confess, a strong anticipatory misgiving as to any epitaph which should be the work of the same hand." Mrs. Charles Cowden Clarke thought better of it and printed the poem in the *Critic*, February 29, 1896 (XXVIII, 150). The *Academy*, February 5, 1876, p. 120, reports that up to the preceding December 31 subscriptions for a bust of Keats intended to be (but never) placed in Westminster Abbey amounted to 1279 lire.

Keats has been executed by Storey³ for a wealthy American lady, with the aid of the mask in Severn's possession— Old M^r Cowden Clarke of Genoa, who was Keats's earliest friend, told me that the mask was made by Haydon the artist, by way of *experiment*, as that erratic genius fancied he might rival Michael Angelo by proving himself equally great in sculpture and in painting—so he persuaded Keats, then a mere youth, to undergo the unpleasant operation, for which we are so greatly indebted for a truthful cast of the Poet's face— Perhaps these particulars may be new to your Lordship—⁴

Should M^r Warrington Wood be eventually employed to model a *Bust*, in addition to the medallion already completed, it has occurred to me that it might find a very appropriate asylum in the Athenæum Club, which may be considered the London Home of our Poets & sculptors of note—

M^r W. Wood refuses to accept any payment for the Medallion; which leaves me with a balance in hand of about £50 to meet the expense of a Bust—for which there was a general wish expressed by English & American visitors at Rome—and M^r Wood has it very much at heart to execute one— The cost would be about £100—(I believe Storey's charge is £200.)

Y^r very truly

Vincent Eyre

P. S. I will endeavour to call on Saturday at 10 A. M as kindly suggested.

³ Not mentioned in Henry James's *William Wetmore Story* (1903). A correspondent in the *New York World*, June 25, 1877, p. 3, after talks with Mrs. Speed, said that "Haydon's cast has been also used by Mr. Story, who has made from it a most admirable bust of Keats, now in the possession of an American lady."

⁴ At least they supplement the account given by Lowell, I, 230f. She dates its making about December, 1816, and notes that Reynolds' cast of it is in the National Portrait Gallery. See also *Aldine*, p. xxxi, Williamson, pp. 98f., and I, 268.

» 284 «

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE TO LORD HOUGHTON ¹

20 October 1875

Jamaica Plain
Massachusetts
Oct 20th/75

Dear Sir—

In thinking over what you told me of the charge made by some persons in England against George Keats, of having improperly used money of his brother—I am more than ever convinced that such a charge must be wholly unfounded. Of all men I have ever known he was the man least capable of such an act. He was not only a strictly honest man—but high minded & honorable in a high degree. All those who knew him while he lived in Ky. would say the same thing. More than this, his love & reverence for his brother John amounted to a sort of worship. All the three brothers, George, Tom, and John, seem, if we may judge by their letters, to have been very much attached to each other. It is far more likely that George should have advanced pecuniary aid to his brothers out of his own means, than that he should have ever made use of theirs.

In case you should wish to communicate with Mrs Emma Speed, the daughter of George Keats, and the proprietor of the painting of which I shewed you a photograph, I add her husbands address—

Philip Speed, Esq.
119 Main Street
Louisville
Ky.

¹ Answered by the letter next following. See *Keats' Reputation*, pp. 95f., and No. 183.

Mrs Speed also possesses all of the Mss. of John Keats which her father formerly had.

I am sorry that I have not been able to find another copy of the photograph. I may yet succeed, however, & if you wish for it, will send it to your address in England.

I hope you will recollect the <certificate> memorandum you promised me concerning the Cromwell autograph.

Very sincerely yours

James Freeman Clarke

Lord Houghton ²

»» 285 ««

LORD HOUGHTON ³ TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE

6 November 1875

Philadelphia

Nov 6,

/75

Dear M^r Clarke.

You see I have not forgotten your 'Cromwell autograph.'

Would you dislike to write a couple of pages respecting the position and character of George Keats in Louisville—which I would insert in the book? Your personal observation would give an authenticity to the story which my bare assertion would not do. If this is agreeable to you I would ask you to send it me in the course of *next* week, to the British Legation at Washington.

I have seen a good deal of a gentleman resident in Louisville, who told me of the tragic end of one of George Keats'

² Written at the foot of p. 1.

³ A reply to the preceding letter. The Cromwell autograph and Houghton's attestation of its genuineness are in Clarke's papers at Harvard.

daughters & the strange domestic history of another— M^r Peeay,—(or some such name)⁴ whose husband, once a most respectable merchant, now keeps a gambling-house in Montreal.

I remain,

Yrs sincerely

Houghton

» 286 «

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE⁵ TO LORD HOUGHTON

10 November 1875

Boston, Massachusetts

Nov 10th, 1875.

My dear Sir—

I send you, with this, a notice of the character of George Keats, the Poets brother, contributed by me to "The Dial," then edited by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

In addition to what you will find in this paper I need only add that any supposition <of> that George Keats could possibly have acted improperly, in any matter of property, toward either of his brothers, appears to me, who knew him intimately, simply incredible. I am sure that it must seem so to every one else who ever enjoyed his intimacy. If there was one man then living in Louisville whose honor and perfect integ-

⁴ For Isabel Keats and Ella Peay see I, xcvi.

⁵ A reply to the preceding letter, with a transcript of part of Clarke's article (itself referred to by Milnes, I, 274) in the *Dial*, IV (1843), 495-504. See No. 183 and *Keats' Reputation*, p. 132. In *Aldine*, p. xxvi, Houghton wrote of George Keats: "His voluntary payment of his brother's debts, after his death, including what had been advanced by Mr. Brown, certainly showed no niggard spirit; and in America he bore the highest character for uprightness and generosity."

ity no one would think of questioning—that man was George Keats.

With thanks for your kind communication, I remain,
sincerely yours

James Freeman Clarke

Lord Houghton

» 287 «

SAMUEL OSGOOD¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

26 November 1875

154 West 11th St

New York. Nov 26. 1875

My dear Lord Houghton.

No act of your literary life comes home to me so nearly as your *Life of John Keats*, for his poems were the delight & wonder of our little reading coterie at Harvard University so long ago & I knew well his brother George soon after I left Harvard in 1836–37.

At your suggestion I have looked over an old Diary to find notes of visits to his house, but these are very scanty & only give hints of subjects of conversation & of acquaintances met at his home. The last significant date is March 20. 1837 with this note: "Dined at Mr Keats' & went to walk with the whole family in the woods."

I remember well & if [I] were a painter, I could sketch from Memory his face & his wife's & perhaps the two elder daughters. They were most kind & pleasant to me, & the husband's serious sense went well together with the playful vola-

¹ Osgood (1812–1880), Harvard A.B., 1832, B.D., 1835, was an associate of James Freeman Clarke at Louisville, and then a minister and author of note in New York. See *Keats' Reputation*, pp. 38f.

tility of the buxom wife. He was decidedly an intellectual man, & we talked much of literary subjects, not infrequently upon his brother's poems, with which he was familiar & of whom he was a fond, but not an indiscriminate critic.

We used to be often together at a Club² of the choice men of Louisville Ky.—scholars, men of the learned professions, judges, statesmen &c. There George Keats was well received, & I think, that when he spoke, his remarks were to the purpose & alike judicious & modest. I remember him as a genial, hospitable, interesting man, & when I left Louisville in 1837 for Boston, I parted with him with great regret & earnest wishes to see him again.

But I never saw him again & when I revisited Louisville, eighteen [years] afterward,³ he had passed away & his family was scattered, & the face of Mrs Speed, then a blooming wife & mother, was the most expressive representative of the father, who had gone & she still had something of the look of John Keats in her eye as in her girlhood.

The widow married again, & I once met her pleasantly, but I do not know her history of late: James Freeman Clarke knows all & will give you his remembrances.

Glad to send these slight notes I remain, my dear Lord Houghton

Yours ever

Sam^l Osgood

P. S. I also send you my address on Crawford the Sculptor⁴

² See I, 291.

³ To *The Knickerbocker Gallery* (New York, 1855) Osgood contributed an essay, "Eighteen Years. A Reminiscence of Kentucky," in which (p. 30) he eulogized George, "the brother of one of our most ideal and gifted poets."

⁴ *Thomas Crawford and Art in America*, a lecture delivered on April 6, 1875, "before the New York Historical Society, upon the Reception of Crawford's Statue of the Indian."

in memorial of my old Pastor, President Walker ⁵ & a Photograph of the beautiful Bryant vase.⁶

» 288 «

HERBERT COURTHOPE BOWEN ¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

6 April 1876

49 Gloucester Place
Portman Sq^{re}
W

April 6th
My Lord

I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in writing to you on the grounds of its being on a subject in which I know you take much interest. I am very anxious to collect materials for a *complete* edition of Keats. Can you tell me whether there are any M S poems yet unprinted which are worthy to be placed in the same volume with *Hyperion*? As far as I can find out those that remain unpublished (or the new pieces lately published by M^r Rossetti ²) though they are very useful in forming a just estimate of the man, do not tend to benefit the repu-

⁵ James Walker (1794-1874), president of Harvard.

⁶ Bryant had entertained Houghton in his home Roslyn in December, 1875. On June 20, 1876, friends presented him with a vase in honor of his eightieth birthday, Osgood making the presentation speech at Chickering Hall, New York. See Parke Godwin, *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant*, II (1883), 366f., 369-371. There is a photograph of the vase and a detailed account of the presentation ceremony in a pamphlet printed at New York in 1876, *To William Cullen Bryant, at Eighty Years, from His Friends and Countrymen*.

¹ Editor, poet, author of *Froebel and Education by Self-Activity* (1893). See the next letter, with its reference to *Aldine* (of November, 1876).

² W. M. Rossetti claims that none of the poems in his 1872 (Moxon) edition, pp. 244-406, have "hitherto appeared in any of the editions of Keats's works."

tation of the poet—& had therefore much better be left, as he left them, in M. S.

The poems, as they stand in your edition, have been so long a source of intense delight to me, that I would fain devote all my best labour & skill to producing an edition worthy of one whom I hold to be amongst the very best of our later poets—

Believe me

Yours truly

H. Courthope Bowen

» 289 «

HERBERT COURTHOPE BOWEN¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

13 April 1876

49 Gloucester Place
Portman Sq^{re}

W

April 13th
My Lord

Many thanks for your very kind letter & its information—I was not aware of your forth-coming Aldine Edition.² I shall study it with the greatest interest—for, as I told you, it is many years since Keats laid strong hold on me. I cannot agree about the indiscriminate printing of any man's works not published by himself—Surely we all of us (you, too, probably) have M.S.S by us that we should be pained to see in print?—that we would leave to our biographer, but never publish? In the case of a long-lived poet, of course, to study his progress from first to last must be extremely useful & interesting—but in the case of Keats, it seems to me, we have either exquisite work or abominable stuff—no visible progress. However I hope your edition will make this clearer to me—

¹ See No. 288.

² See II, 349n.

Thanking you once more for your kindness in writing
 Believe me
 Yours truly
 H. Courthope Bowen

»» 290 ««

GENERAL SIR VINCENT EYRE¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

22 July 1876

ATHENAEUM CLUB
 PALL MALL S. W.

22 July 1876

Dear Lord Houghton,

I sh^d be glad to consult your Lordship before leaving town, on the subject of Keats' Bust—as I shall be returning to Rome in November next— I have a fine Photographic View of the Cemetery in which he lies & one of the Medallion recently erected, of which I wish to beg y^r acceptance, if you will tell me where to send them.

Y^s truly

Vincent Eyre

R^t H^{ble}

Lord Houghton

¹ See No. 282. In this note Eyre used impressionistic dashes for various letters. On the bust and the medallion (which was unveiled on February 23, 1876) see No. 283.

» 291 «

C. W. RUSSELL¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

10 October 1876

St Patrick's College²

Maynooth Oct. 10. 1876

My dear Lord Houghton

I send you the true Shelley Nile sonnet.

It was printed in the March N^o of the St James Magazine 1876, being one of Shelleys unpublished MSS in the hands of Mr Townshend Mayor.³ In the Academy⁴ for the following week it was pointed out as quite evidently the Sonnet written by Shelley on occasion of the contest described by you in the Life of Keats—the St James for April notices this suggestion of the Academy & acquiesces in it. (p. 109)

I think you will say that it is like Shelley.

I am very glad of the accident which led me to allude to it on Saturday last, just in time for your volume.⁵

¹ Russell (1812–1880) was president of Maynooth College, Ireland. He encloses a transcript of Shelley's "Month after month the gather'd rains descend," which Houghton has endorsed: "Up to the discovery of this sonnet among <the> Shelley's papers in the possession of Mr Townshend Major—the sonnet entitled 'Ozymandias' was believed to be that written in competition with Keats." This information is repeated almost verbatim, with the name printed as "Major," in *Aldine*, p. 205n. See also Nos. 189, 210, 261, 293.

² This word is illegible.

³ Samuel Ralph Townshend Mayer (1840–1880), miscellaneous writer, became editor and proprietor of the *St. James's Magazine* in 1875.

⁴ March 11, p. 240, where, without any further comment, it is referred to as the "Sonnet to the Nile."

⁵ *Aldine*, 1876.

With best wishes for your son's complete & speedy recovery⁶

I remain, my dear Lord,
Your very sincere & faithful

C W Russell

»» 292 ««

HERBERT V. LINDON¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

29 December 1876

4 Abingdon Villas
Kensington
29 Dec^r 76.

My Lord,

I have in my possession the letters addressed by Keats to my late Mother (then Miss Brawn) during the time of his

⁶ See Reid, II, 344-346, for R. O. A. Milnes's "severe accident" in Ireland during the autumn of 1876.

¹ Houghton had read Keats's letters to Fanny Brawne at least by February 6, 1875 (see II, 337). They were then owned by Sir Charles W. Dilke, who (*Life*, by Gertrude M. Tuckwell, II [1917], 543) later wrote: "About this time (1878) Mr. Buxton Forman announced for publication the Keats Love-Letters, which I certainly thought I had in a vague way bought for the purpose of preventing publication. They had been long in my possession, but the son of Fanny Brawne had claimed them, and I, having no written agreement, had found it necessary to give them up—although what I had bought and paid for, unless it was the right to prevent publication, I do not know." In the preface to his edition (1878) of the letters Forman says, "it is by her family that they have been entrusted to the editor." Hence Sir Charles in the *Athenaeum*, February 16, 1878, p. 218, denounced "the owners of these letters," and asserted that "if their publication . . . is the greatest impeachment of a woman's sense of womanly delicacy to be found in the history of literature, Mr. Forman's extraordinary preface is no less notable as a sign of the degradation to which the bookmaker has sunk." See also I, xlix, and Adami's discussion, pp. 182-190, and No. 297.

illness & up to the time of his departure to Italy. I have been advised that Your Lordship may perhaps wish to purchase them & as I have no objection to dispose of them I beg, in the event of such being the case to offer them to Your Lordship.

I have the honor to be

Your Lordships

Obedient Servant

Herbert V.³ Lindon.

The

Lord Houghton

» 293 «

HARRY BUXTON FORMAN TO LORD HOUGHTON

4 February 1877

38 Marlborough Hill

S^t John's Wood

London, N. W.

4 Feb. 77

My Lord,

In giving Shelley's Sonnet to the Nile in my edition of his works, I wish to give by way of appendix Keats's and Leigh Hunt's.⁴ Will you kindly inform me whether I am at liberty to print Keats's? May I also ask whether there was anything among Keats's papers to point to *Ozymandias* as Shelley's Sonnet in the Nile competition? Or was it not rather the want of any other bearing on the subject that led to that being regarded

³ Forman in a letter of August 21, 1889, to F. H. Day calls him Herbert V. Lindon, of the Imperial Continental Gas Association, 31 Clements Lane, E.C.; and Lindon likewise signed his name "Herbert V." in writing to Day, October 6, 1889, from 4 Augusta Gardens, Folkestone. More recently the Formans always call him Herbert Brawne-Lindon.

⁴ See II, 155, 182.

as Shelley's share? You may be interested to know that the real Nile Sonnet of Shelley, found among Hunt's papers, has Keats's "Robin Hood," in his autograph, on the same paper.⁵

I am, My Lord,
very faithfully yours

H Buxton Forman

The Rt. Hon.

Lord Houghton

&c &c &c

»» 294 ««

GENERAL SIR VINCENT EYRE¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

5 June 1877

Grand Hotel d'Aix
Aix les Bains
France
5. June 1877,

Dear Lord Houghton—

Being delayed here on my way home from Rome by Lady Eyre's² indisposition, which obliges her to take a course of baths, I think it desirable to mention to your Lordship in writing—what I had purposed saying *vivâ voce*,—that I met with an unexpected obstacle in my efforts to carry out what had seemed a very simple object; viz³—that of placing in the outer wall of the house where Keats died a mural Tablet, to com-

⁵ See Garrod, p. 270. In his edition of Shelley (1880) Forman printed "Ozymandias" and "To the Nile" at I, 376, III, 411 (with a facsimile of the manuscript), with quotations only from Milnes, and with no reference to the *Aldine* text.

¹ See No. 282.

² Eyre's second wife, his cousin Catherine Mary (daughter of Captain T. Eyre, R.N.), whom he married in 1860.

memmorate that Event, with a simple inscription, somewhat to the following effect:

“In this house—died—

John Keats
the Young English Poet.
on the 21st Feby. 1821.”³

The permission of the owner of the house had been obtained, but that of the Municipal Syndic was also required—and was refused by him on the plea that (to use the words of my informant) “*Keats was not recognized as a SUBLIMITY*”!—Of course this could only be the result of sheer ignorance—but it has been a hindrance, not the less, in effecting the object—although, I trust, only a temporary one—I cannot but think that a few lines from your Lordship’s pen would suffice to over-rule the flimsy objection—.

It seems the rule in Rome that all such tablets, in memory of eminent men, should have on them the letters “S. P. Q. R.” which renders them public property & protects them from removal—an excellent rule in itself—but it empowers the Municipality to throw obstacles in the way, as in the present case—

No doubt the proposed tablet to Keats would be chiefly interesting to the English & American visitors & residents in Rome— The house stands at the base of the grand flight of steps leading from the “Piazza di Spagna” to the Piazza “Trinita di Monti,” and the inscription would attract the notice of all persons of those nations ascending & descending the said steps.—

That part of Rome is chiefly frequented by the English speaking nationalities; & who seldom omit to visit the grave of the deceased Poet near the Pyramid of Caius Cestius when opportunity offers. Hence, it cannot be doubted that the proposed Mural Tablet would prove highly interesting to all

³ For the inscription actually placed see No. 300.

such persons; and the very fact of this undying interest existing in full force after the lapse of more than half a century might be safely accepted by the Syndic and his colleagues as sufficient proof of "Sublimity"—

I hope to be in London about the first week in July, when your Lordship will probably have left—

I hope I am not intruding too far on your kindness in appealing thus to your powerful influence—

I have a small but ⁴ sufficient fund in hand to defray all necessary expenses—

Believe me. Very truly yours Vincent Eyre

M General

» 295 «

OSCAR WILDE TO LORD HOUGHTON ¹

June (?) 1877

1 Merrion Square. N
Dublin

Dear Lord Houghton

Knowing your love and admiration for John Keats I venture to send you a sonnet which I wrote lately at Rome on him: and should be very glad to know if you see any beauty or stuff in it.²

⁴ The remainder of the letter is written crosswise in the left margin of the last page.

¹ Written on mourning paper: Wilde's father died on April 19, 1876.

² The sonnet, herewith enclosed, is entitled "Keats' Grave," and in lines 6 and 11 reads "his tomb" and "of our English." Renamed "Heu Miserande Puer" and with the readings in lines 6 and 11 changed to "his grave" and "of the English" it was first printed in an article, "The Tomb of Keats," *Irish Monthly*, July, 1877 (V, 476-478), and then after further revisions, in Wilde's *Poems* (1881), p. 147. In the article he thriftily reproduced phraseology from this letter:—

"As I stood beside the mean grave of this divine boy, I thought of

Someway standing by his grave I felt that *he too* was a Martyr, and worthy to lie in the City of Martyrs— I thought of him as a Priest of Beauty slain before his Time, a lovely Sebastian killed by the arrows of a lying and unjust tongue—

Hence—my Sonnet. But I really have other views in writing to you than merely to gain your criticism of a boyish poem.

I dont know if you have visited Keats grave since a marble tablet in his memory was put up on the wall close to the tomb. There are some fairly good lines of poetry on it, but what is really objectionable in it is the bas relief of Keats' <own> head—or rather a *medallion profile*, which is *extremely ugly*, exaggerates his facial angle so as almost to give him a hatchet-face and instead of the finely cut nostril, and Greek sensuous delicate lips that he had, gives him thick almost negro lips and nose—

Keats we know was lovely as Hyakinthos, or Apollo, to look at, & this medallion is a very terrible lie and misrepresentation— I wish it cd. be removed and a tinted bust of Keats put in its place, like the beautiful coloured bust of the Rajah of Koolapoor at Florence—

Keats delicate features and rich colour could not be conveyed I think in plain white marble.

In any case I do not think this very ugly thing ought to

him as of a Priest of Beauty slain before his time; and . . . St. Sebastian came before my eyes . . . a lovely brown boy . . . pierced by arrows. . .

"Recently some well-meaning persons have placed a marble slab on the wall of the cemetery with a medallion-profile of Keats on it, and some mediocre lines of poetry [see II, 342n.]. The face is ugly, and rather hatchet-shaped, with thick, sensual lips, and is utterly unlike the poet himself, who was very beautiful to look upon. . . this 'marble libel,' which I hope will soon be taken down. I think the best representation of the poet would be a coloured bust, like that of the young Rajah of Koolapoor at Florence. . . ." (The first draft of the sonnet, as written—with many variant readings—at Rome, is also in the Harvard Keats Collection.)

be allowed to remain: I am sure a photograph of it cd. easily be got, and you would see how horrid it is—

Your influence and great name could achieve anything and everything in the matter—and I think a really beautiful memorial might be erected to him— Surely if everyone who loves to read Keats gave even half-a-crown, a great sum of money could be got for it.

I know you always are engaged in *Politics and Poetry*, but I feel sure that with your name at the head of the list, a great deal of money w^d be got: in any case the ugly libel of Keats could be taken down.

I should be very glad to hear a line from you about it—and feel sure that you will pardon my writing to you on the subject— For you are fitted above all others to do anything for Keats' memory—

I hope we will see you again in Ireland: ² I have very pleasant memories of some delightful evenings passed in your society

Believe me

Yours truly

Oscar Wilde.

² Houghton was there in October and November, 1876 (Reid, II, 344f.).

» 296 «

THOMAS SATCHELL ¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

17 July 1877

Lord Houghton D. C. L.

&c &c ²Downshire Hill House
Hampstead N. W.
July 17th 1877

My Lord

I should feel deeply indebted to your Lordship if you would kindly send me a postcard intimating whether the first or the second (appended) statement respecting John Keats gives the more correct account of the lady to whom he was attached when a resident in the neighbourhood from which I write. My desire is to identify the house or houses in which the poet resided, for I am not satisfied with the identification of "Wentworth place" which has been recently published, & the knowledge of the lady's position with respect to M^r Charles Armitage Brown would prove of material service in my inquiry.

The Statements are these:—

M^r Howitt (*Northern Heights of London*) writes: "Previous to this [his brother's death] ³ he & his brother Thomas had oc-

¹ Author of numerous books on angling. (See also No. 299.) He anticipated Forman, who discussed "The Locality of Wentworth Place" in an appendix to his *Letters of John Keats to Fanny Brawne* (1878), and again in 1883, IV, 193-198. Sir Charles W. Dilke in the *Athenaeum*, February 16, 1878, p. 218, tartly commented: "Among the persons now living who could have spared Mr. Forman and his readers all this trouble is Mr. Dilke's own brother, who could have settled the matter in a dozen words."

² Written at the bottom of the first page.

³ Bracketed in the original.

cupied apartments at the next house to M^r Brown's; at a Mrs ——'s whose name his biographers have carefully omitted. With the daughter of this lady &c &c." M^r W. M. Rossetti ⁴ says (*Life* prefixed to *Works*) Keats spent the winter of 1817-8 at Hampstead & somewhere about this time met the lady who was a cousin of M^r Brown's & was then staying at his house "to be out of the way of some domestic discomfort"; also that he afterwards "returned to his old neighbourhood & was for a while almost domesticated with her family."

I cannot find sufficient warrant for either of these statements in the *Life* written by Your Lordship. I judge from the poet's letters that Tom died in Well Walk & therefore not "next door to M^r Brown's" (unless Wentworth place was in Well Walk) as M^r Howitt states. If the lady were a cousin of M^r Brown's, as M^r Rossetti alleges, & living with her mother, as M^r Howitt states, at "the next house" it is difficult to understand the statement made by the poet in his letter to George of 29 Oct 1818 respecting her quarrel with her grandfather with whom she would appear to have previously resided. Again I cannot reconcile these allegations with the fact that he & his friend Brown were both residing in the house of a M^r Bentley (Vol i.247) where Brown was apparently a lodger like himself ("I have the front parlour & he the back" *ib*) and that when he went back to the lady's family after his return from Winchester "he lived alone" as appears from letter to Taylor of 17 Nov^r 1819.

It would almost appear as if there were two ladies, but this was certainly not the case and I therefore apprehend that either M^r Howitt or M^r Rossetti has fallen into error. Of the "Wentworth place" recently put forth I have been able to trace all the residents since the time of Keats and your Lordship's intimation as to who is right & who wrong would prove of great

⁴ Howitt's book appeared at London in 1869, Rossetti's in 1872.

service to me. One old resident professes to remember the M^r Brown when a tenant of the premises and is aware of his emigration to New Zealand. M^{rs} Steele then lived next door, or rather in the same house which then formed two tenements. The "lady" could not be this person's daughter however, as her name began with B. ("Brown is writing some Spenserian stanzas against Miss B & me" i 269)

I trust it will not appear very extraordinary that I should desire to identify the ground whereon ("the plum tree" ⁵ must have perished I fear) the Ode to a Nightingale was written and which may or may not be a portion of my own property; and to see the house in which that wonderful "Hyperion" was composed. If your Lordship will kindly oblige me with a postcard to the effect I have stated you would confer a favour for which I should feel very much obliged

I have the honour to be
my Lord
Your humble ⁶ Servant
Tho. Satchell

»» 297 ««

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD ¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

7 October 1877

The Century Oct 7th/77

My dear Lord Houghton,

(If you will let an American say so,) I am infinitely obliged to you for your prompt answer to my queries about

⁵ See Milnes, I, 245.

⁶ Doubtful word.

¹ American poet, critic, and editor (1825-1903), of New York. Written in pencil.

Miss Braun. I did not tell you *why* I put them, but I will now do so, and I must beg ² you to keep the matter entirely to yourself. The unsentimental wine merchants ³ you wot, (or some one in their behalf,) are about to publish poor, dear, dead Keats's letters to their heartless mother! I have in type eleven pages of Scribners Magazine, the first of two instalments of a paper, or study of Keats, "After many days." ⁴ I shall mail a copy to you, first as the writer of K's Life, and second as the last editor of his poetical works, which I have used throughout. I do not agree with you in all cases, as you will perceive, but I hope I have done you full justice. At any rate you will know that I have not intentionally ruffled a feather of your wings. All this is a little from the purpose, which was to say that I am waiting for that *Liber Amoris*, in order to wind up my double-barreled paper properly. You see the necessity for your and my silence. I know the book cannot injure the memory of that great poet, but think of the infamy of publishing his love letters fifty six years after his death! Do you suppose William put himself on paper to Mistress Davenant before he put himself in Master Davenant's sheets? Scarcely—as we say over here, or not muchly, as you say over there. Nary [?] time. Not such a duffer. No: he enjoyed his bona roba in the dark: "the rest is silence" ⁵

It is a pity that the last edition of Keats was set up and printed while you were here. There are errors in it, and at least one poem is left out. You of course found that out long

² Written beg to.

³ Houghton used the same phrase when he wrote to Sir Charles W. Dilke (*Life*, by Gertrude M. Tuckwell, II [1917], 543), commending his *Athenaeum* review of Keats's love letters (see II, 353n.) as "a capital flagellation of those unfilial wine-merchants." Louis Lindon, Fanny Brawne's husband, was a wine merchant at 22 St. Swithin's Lane, E.C., and agent for Ruinard Père et Fils, of Rheims, champagne growers and merchants.

⁴ See *Scribner's Monthly*, XV (1878), 203-213, 402-417.

⁵ "William's" *Hamlet*, V.ii.369.

ago. It is the <begin> one containing "Away with old hock and madeira." ⁶ You give *two* poems ⁷ what ⁸ you doubt. I am quite sure that Keats didnt write one of them—not the sonnet, but the longer poem in the measure of "Bards of passion etc.," or something like it. I should say that George Gordon (de Luna, he called himself here,) was as big a forger as his alleged father ⁹ was a liar. To have such a by-blow as that fellow is to pay a heavy penalty for being a great poet.

You expressed a wish, my lord, when you were among us, to have a Ms of Poe's. If you still have the wish I will send you one with the greatest pleasure: on the condition that you will have a clean, legible copy of it made, and sent to me with your attestation that *you* have the original! You may give me any autograph you like in exchange, or none at all. I should like,—what you wouldn't part with (nor would I in your place) something of Keats's. I was told lately that the whole Ms "The Eve of St Agnes" was here in New York, in the possession of a bankers wife, to whom it was given by George Keats. What right has *she* to it when *I* want it? Confound the woman! May she turn gray early! May her store teeth drop into her soup! May her rival outshine her at Newport! May (I am in a good cursing humor this prayerful day,) May her banking husband suspend payment,—smash—bust, go into bankruptcy, and (here comes the clincher) AND may she have to sell this divine Ms, and may nobody want it but *me*, and *I* get it for £5! (*D.V.*)

⁶ It begins, "Hence Burgundy, Claret, and Port."

⁷ "What sylph-like form before my eyes" and "Pleasures lie thickest where no pleasures seem," *Aldine*, pp. 326-329, 493 (both omitted by Garrod). To the second Houghton adds the note, "I believe this to be one of George Byron's forgeries," and another note inferentially points to the same origin for the first.

⁸ *Sic*.

⁹ Byron.

—I am sure you excuse these pencillings by the way,¹⁰ in view of the sad fact that I have lost the use of my dexter hand, and am driven to sinister practises. I cannot perpetrate my iniquities in ink.

I will do myself the honor of sending with the Keats paper, Part 1, two of my recent—I have¹¹ the word poem—pieces of verse.

With many thanks, my dear Lord Houghton, for your kindness about the unkind Miss Braun (why not Brawn?)¹² I am,

Sincerely yours

R. H Stoddard

¹⁰ A reference to N. P. Willis' book so titled.

¹¹ Or perhaps leave.

¹² In *Scribner's* Stoddard keeps Houghton's spelling "Braun," but says nothing of Keats's letters to her. In *Appleton's Journal*, IV (1878), 379-382, however, reviewing the New York (1878) edition of the letters, he demolishes the Brawnes, Keats the lover, Forman, and "this most objectionable book."

»» 298 ««

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD: ¹ POEM ON KEATS15, 16 January 1878²

Printed in *Scribner's Monthly* (S), June, 1880 (XX, 224), and in Stoddard's *Poems* (New York, 1880), pp. 433f. (P), with variants listed below in footnotes.

TO THE IMMORTAL ³ MEMORY OF KEATS.

(On coming into the ⁴ possession of his copy of ⁵
 "Guzman de ⁶ Alfarache." London ⁷ 1634.⁸)

Great Father mine, deceased ere I was born,
 And in a classic land renowned of old;
 Thy life was happy, but thy death forlorn,
 Buried in violet's ⁹ and Roman mould.¹⁰

¹ See No. 297.

² At the top of the page Stoddard notes: "I obtained this treasure in the afternoon of January 15th, 1878. Wrote the sonnet below in the evening of that day, and the morning of the next day. 'And the evening and the morning were the first day.' R. H. S." Lowell, I, 615f., observes that he paid fifty dollars for the book, which he gave to the Authors Club, New York, and sold the sonnet for twenty-five dollars. The book is inscribed to Keats by Rice ("John Keats From his Friend J^s Rxxx 20th April 1818"), to whom it was returned by Brown after the poet's death (see I, 256, note 34). Also in Rice's autograph are the words: "Purchased by me A D 1818—and given to John Keats and upon his death 1821—returned to me Rice".

³ P omits.⁴ S, P omit.⁵ P "The Rogue: or.⁶ S D'.⁷ S omits.⁸ S omits.⁹ S, P violets.¹⁰ P Mold.

Thou hast the Laurel, Master of my soul!
 Thy name, thou said'st,¹¹ was writ in water— No;
 For while clouds float on high, and billows roll,
 That ¹² name shall worshipped be. Will mine be so?

I kiss thy words, as I would kiss thy face,
 And put thy book most reverently away;
 Girt by ¹³ thy peers, thou hast an honored place,
 Amid the ¹⁴ kingliest,—Byron, Wordsworth, Gray.

If tears will fill mine eyes, am I to blame?
 "O smile among ¹⁵ the shades, for this is fame!"

329 E. 15th St New York.

R. H. Stoddard

»» 299 ««

THOMAS SATCHELL¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

22 June 1878

The Rt: Honble:

Lord Houghton D. C. L. &c &c ²

Downshire Hill House

Hampstead N. W

June 22nd 1878

My Lord

I take the liberty of begging your acceptance of a copy of

¹¹ P saidst.

¹² P Thy.

¹³ S Beside.

¹⁴ S Amid our, P Among the.

¹⁵ P away.

¹ See No. 296 and Colvin, p. 321n. Satchell encloses a photograph of Lawn Bank. Other photographs were reproduced by Kenyon West, October, 1895 (*Century Magazine*, L, 901), J. G. Speed, October, 1895 (*McClure's Magazine*, V, 463, where it is mislabeled the "House at Well Walk"), and, the best of all, by Forman, October, 1906 (*London Bookman*, Supplement, p. 21). A commemorative tablet was placed on the house on February 24, 1896.

² This address is at the bottom of the first page.

a view of the long-lost *Wentworth place* (now known as *Lawn Bank*) which has been taken at my request by a local photographer.

That portion of the house which lies to the right of the present entrance formed the residence of Mrs. Brawne and her daughters; that to the left, of Charles Armitage Broun.

The front room, which (as appears in your biography of the poet) was occupied by Keats when "domesticated" with M^r Broun, remains apparently in its original condition, though the interior of the house must have been subjected to considerable alteration, during the process of converting the two residences into one for the convenience of Miss Chester,³ who also added the large room to the side of the house which is nearest to Wentworth House where M^r Dilke lived.—

I have the honour to be

My Lord

Your humble Servant

Tho. Satchell

P. S.

On a closer examination of the photograph I notice a mark on the house just above the string course to the left of the bedroom window, which (*ni fallor*) indicates the position of the name (*Wentworth place*) which M^r Forman has discovered to be still distinguishable under the paint & whitewash of upwards of a quarter of a century

T. S.

³ Forman, IV, 197n., notes that "she first appeared upon the London boards in 1822, and afterwards became 'Private Reader' to George IV."

»» 300 ««

GENERAL SIR VINCENT EYRE¹ TO LORD HOUGHTON

2 July 1878

Hotel de France et Bath

Rue de S^t Honoré

Paris

2^d July. 1878

Dear Lord Houghton—

The enclosed² will shew you the style of tablet & inscription which is being prepared in Rome to be erected on the outer wall of the house wherein Keats died— All is now happily arranged— The new syndic made no difficulties, like his predecessor—but I had to arrange matters with the owner of the house

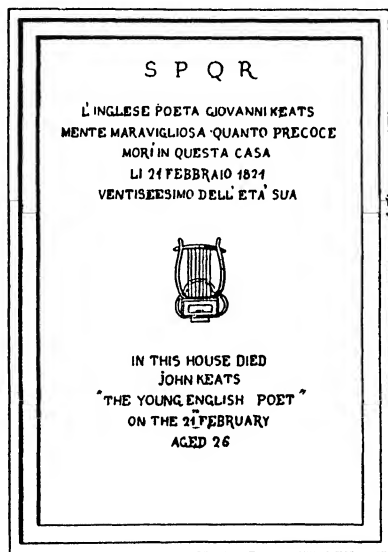
¹ See No. 282. The tablet was unveiled on February 28, 1879. According to *The Times*, March 1, p. 5, "Sir Vincent Eyre, to whose efforts the erection of the tablet is due, made an admirable address. . . . He spoke of Joseph Severn, . . . who would have been present had not age and infirmities rendered it impossible in such weather. . . . Dr. Nevin, on behalf of his American countrymen, bore testimony to their admiration of the poet's genius and their interest in his memory—for his name was written upon their hearts. He proposed a vote of thanks to Sir Vincent Eyre, which was second[ed] by Mr. Parry, and a vote of thanks to Her Majesty's Ambassador [Sir Augustus Paget] having been passed, three British cheers were given and the ceremony was over."

² The ink drawing on tracing paper reproduced herewith. The tablet actually put up, 160 by 125 centimeters in size, is of marble, and the inscriptions, the Italian composed by Count Terenzio Mamiani della Rovere (1799-1885), philosopher and statesman, the English by Eyre, run:

L'Inglese poeta Giovanni Keats/ mente meravigliosa quanto precoce/
morì in questa casa/ li 24 Febbraio 1821/ ventesimosesto dell' età sua/
[A lyre is engraved here] The young English poet/ John Keats/ died in
this house/ on the 24th February 1821/ aged 26.

(Another marble tablet, 130 by 40 centimeters, commemorating the opening of the Keats-Shelley Memorial House, was also placed there in 1909.)

and its architect—and to submit the whole matter for the information & approval of the municipality—who exercise a controul over all such public monuments & whose “S. P. Q. R.” will ensure their constant protection—



I hope your lordship will approve the inscriptions— That in Italian language differs somewhat from that in English—in order to suit the national ideas & forms of expression—while that in English is purposely made as simple as possible, to harmonize with the record on the poet's tombstone—and the *Greek lyre* of the latter has, for the same reason, been introduced.³

³ The inaccuracy of the inscriptions was attacked in the *Athenaeum* by W. B. Scott (March 15, 1879, pp. 345f.) and Sir Charles W. Dilke (April 5, p. 437). From Rome, Eyre replied (March 29, p. 408, April 26, p. 536) that he had followed Keats's tombstone because "it was so desirable that the two inscriptions should harmonize," and that Severn had recently assured him that the tombstone was "the most reliable" witness of the correct date of the death (see I, 225f., n.).

I hope to be in London for a few days, after the 9th July—
at the Athenæum—in case your Lordship sh^d wish to address
me—

Yrs very try

Vincent Eyre
M. General

APPENDIX: MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS 1806–1860

Numbers 301–350

APPENDIX: MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

1806-1860

The fifty letters that follow have no references to Keats, but were written by his friends: three by Bailey, thirty-seven by Hessey, one each by Jane Reynolds Hood, Isabella Clarke Towers, and John Taylor, and seven by Reynolds. In them, too, the names of other members of the Keats circle, as Darling, De Wint, Hazlitt, Hilton, Lamb, Rice, and Woodhouse, frequently appear; and, although some of the letters have been quoted by Blunden, their interest and value for students of nineteenth-century literature, and particularly for students of the *London Magazine* and Keats's friends, warrant their inclusion here. Other important names that turn up, and that need no annotation, are those of Bernard Barton, H. F. Cary, Allan Cunningham, John Clare, Barry Cornwall (B. W. Procter), Thomas Darley, Thomas De Quincey, Thomas Hood, Walter Savage Landor, and Edward Moxon. Minor personages, like Joseph Bonsor, the Falkners, Samuel Patrick, and John Percival, are usually annotated once, and may be traced thereafter through the Index. No attempt has been made to identify a number of Hessey's and Taylor's personal friends, like the Hunters, the Nobles, the Whites, and the Wrights, though, of course, all are indexed. Hessey appears in this correspondence as a good, kindly, intelligent man who had an important share in editing the *London Magazine*, and various new facts are brought out in regard to the life and works of Bailey, Darley, Hood, Reynolds, and others.

»» 301 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

19 August 1806

Address: Mr Taylor/ Mess.- Vernor, Hood & C^y ¹/ 31 Poultry/ London.

Postmark: AU 22 1806. A few sentences are printed by Blunden, p. 25.

Kinsale August 19. 1806

My dear Friend

I could have wished to have seen your very interesting Letter earlier as among other advantages to be derived from it I should have redeemed one or two hours from Dissipation or Vacuity by perusing and answering it— I have indeed my Lad been seeing the World and if I return to England with a little Experience it will not be obtained at the cheapest rate— Traveling in this Country is uncommonly expensive and the accommodations on the roads are very indifferent—the beauty of the country in many Parts exceeds any Idea I could have formed of it and the sullen rugged Barrenness of others is equally surprising— The sublime Grandeur of the Mountains which abound in most parts of Ireland and the softness so beautifully contrasted to them in the smooth shining surface of the extensive lakes—the narrow turnpike road fenced by a rude stone Wall without any cement, stretching across an immense black-looking Bog of many miles in length, diversified in many Places by large Heaps of Turf which the Peasants cut in small pieces about the size of bricks for Fuel, and which are there piled up to Dry—the small rude Cabbins scattered on each side the road

¹ Vernor and Hood (father of the poet), publishers, for whom Taylor worked.

built of mud and roughly thatched—at the door of each half a dozen of rosy faced hardy Children running about with scarcely any covering but that which Nature gave them and with the smile of cheerfulness upon their Countenances— These, my dear Fellow, these and many other Scenes which I cannot describe to you, would have raised in your mind as they did in mine Ideas the most sublime—but I had not you to commune with on my Travels and the Impression which these objects made upon me remain faintly stamped upon my Memory— I am happy to receive so good an account of my friends in England and indeed I cannot but rejoice at the happiness both you and my amiable Friends at C——² must derive from the restoration of order and harmony between you— Your statement of your feelings & Enjoyments at Vauxhall is indeed moving and will I hope not be the only one I shall have from you of a similar Kind— For their Mention of me I beg you to return my most sincere thanks to M^{rs} W.—³ and Her Daughters— I fear some time will elapse ere I shall have an opportunity of paying my respects in Person— I have just returned to this Place from Cork where I have done much less Business than I expected— In a few days I shall set off for Dublin where I have great hopes— Ireland is improving much in a literary point of View and I have a firm persuasion that from the connection which I have personally formed here we shall be able if in our way to transact considerable Business in this Part of the Country— You saw poor Freemans⁴ Letter— I hope you were the only Person as I should have been distressed had Patrick⁵ open'd it— I am not conscious of having written any thing to F.— which

² Claverton, near Bath.

³ Perhaps the Mrs. White or Mrs. Wright, often mentioned in Hessey's letters.

⁴ A resident of Farnham: see I, gon.

⁵ Perhaps Samuel Patrick, surgeon, of 37 Devonshire Street, Queen Square, who is mentioned often in these letters.

could give him any Idea that any misunderstanding existed between us as he seems to suspect— He is an affectionate fellow and I should be sorry that he should feel any uneasiness on the Subject— I wrote to him on Sunday— Frank Haden ⁶ wrote me a very pretty affectionate Letter with a pressing Invitation to me to visit Tettenhall but I have wasted so much Time and Money that I scarcely think I shall be able to call even at Retford on my way back to London Though my inducements are so great that I certainly shall fulfil both engagements if it lie in my power— I shall have a great deal to tell you on my return which I cannot compress into the limits of a Letter nor conjure up into my memory at once— And indeed I cannot but regret frequently my absence from London— I have been for a fortnight in Cork since my return from Galway and I am completely tired of it—not indeed that my reception there has been by any means unpleasant—but that I want a travelling Companion of my own Kidney to share in my Amusements— Fred Falkner ⁷ you told me would write with your Letter—he deferred it till to morrow and I am extremely sorry for it as I should be happy to hear from him— Asprey ⁸ writes as he speaks, as gaily and friendly as possible— I answered his Letter a few Days ago as soon as I received it for the whole of the letters which were sent me from London were lying here unopen'd for three or four weeks in my Absence— I am sorry to hear of poor Patricks Illness and hope he has recovered ere this— Pray what is become of John White—? is he still with Keats ⁹ or is he removed with

⁶ F. W. Haden, who served under the Duke of Wellington 1809–1813 (Blunden, pp. 24f.).

⁷ Frederick Falkner, later Hessey's brother-in-law, who lived with Haden, Taylor, and Hessey at 93 Fleet Street (the same).

⁸ William Asprey, of Smith and Asprey, goldsmiths and jewelers, 4 Bruton Street, Berkeley Square (*Post Office London Directory*, 1814, 1820). By 1822 (the same, 1822) Asprey was in business alone at the same address.

⁹ Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir Richard Goodwin Keats (1757–1834).

Sir John Duckworth¹⁰ to the Royal George?—In your next inform me—I say your next as I hope you will write immediately on receipt of this addressed to me at the Post Office Dublin—The Pride and Pleasure I feel at hearing from you is I assure [you] not less than you can experience & as you flatter me by saying our regard is reciprocal I can answer for that which you possess from y^r faithf^l Friend
JAHessey

Give my best respects to Hunter,¹¹ Falkner, Asprey, Patrick, Willshire¹² cum multis aliis quos nunc præscribere longum est— I have so long been out of practice that I can scarcely hold my Pen as formerly, and am so stupid that you must excuse this inanimate Scrawl— I met with your Traveller Mr Cummings¹³ who gave me some Hints about the Dublin Booksellers which will save me much trouble and I have several Introductions in that City so Hey for Pleasure once more
JAH

»» 302 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

2 June 1809

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Bath/ fav^d by Mr Falkner.¹

Fleet Street June 2^d 1809

Dear John

I was not much disappointed at not receiving any Letter from <Bath> Oxford as I concluded that you would be too much engaged to write though you had promised to do it—as for

¹⁰ Admiral Sir John Thomas Duckworth (1748–1817).

¹¹ See II, 401.

¹² *The Post Office London Directory*, 1814, lists only L. Willshire, “news-paper vender,” 11 London Wall.

¹³ See II, 384n., 391n.

¹ See II, 377n.

Mr Fred ² he never shewed himself in Fleet Street after Monday last until last Evening about 7 oClock at which time I was out seeking after Mr Otridge ³ & the Classic Authors and when I returned behold Fred was off— I could not of course send you any Intelligence by him nor as it seems did he think much about carrying any to his Friends at Bath, for a Letter for Charlotte Stothert ⁴ lay upon the mantle piece directly facing him as he came into the room, but he left it behind him—it is enclosed with this in Frank Falkner's Parcel— I have been grievously plagued about this Plate—it did not arrive here till Wednesday Evening and the Number is not out yet— Cooke has done it justice as far as care & execution go, but the plate wants a little more Work yet to make it a fine engraving—we have therefore only worked off 400 impressions at present and he is to add to it what may then be wanting Every one who has seen the proof is very well pleased with it.

A letter came from Hilton to you on Monday which I opened when I recognized the head of Seneca on the Seal— He does not say much but thanks you for your Invitation which however he is obliged to decline in favor of Dewint—he sets off from Lincoln on the 5th (Monday) and hopes to bring with him *three pictures*—this is good News indeed ⁵— Cooke is going on with the first plate of the Mirror and M^r Wilson ⁶ has the copy and is to proceed with all possible celerity— The only unpleasant circumstance which greatly annoys me is the want of Cash— Business continues grievously dull and I have been dun-

² Falkner.

³ Otridge and Son, booksellers, 134 Strand. Later on the firm was called Otridge and Rackham, 39 Strand.

⁴ Of Bath.

⁵ Hilton did the illustrations for Taylor and Hessey's edition (1806) of Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World; or, Letters from a Chinese Philosopher* (Blunden, p. 26).

⁶ Possibly William Wilson, printer, 4 Greville Street, Hatton Garden.

ning every body whom I could dun without much effect— I shall want 100£ next Week to answer Bills and on Monday I shall scarcely have as many Pence to proceed with unless something good should turn up to day or tomorrow— I rather think my bargain with Ryley is broken off so I shall only account to him for what we have sold and let him do what he pleases with the remainder— He wanted Bills at 2 Months for the whole amount which when I of course refused he blew up a little and [. . .]’ after some squabbling between us he parted with me in no very good humour—

I have been highly honoured since your departure in a return of the wedding Visit from M^{rs} Noble & her sisters ⁸ who did me the honor of taking a glass of Wine &c yesterday Morning and on Monday I went with them to the <Expedition> Exhibition— Don’t you think me a happy fellow—but not half so happy as you are in the Gaiety of Bath—take care of yourself my Boy I presume you have received the Portmanteaus &c safely and found the Key in Henry’s— I saw the Bath Coach pass our house with your trunk lashed on the top— Fred has run away and left his Washerwomans Bill unpaid—she has just sent in a long Account against him— I have not time to write more at present but believe me nevertheless notwithstanding

Yours truly JAH

let me hear from you soon

I have sent you a Number of the Citizen & a Copy of the Letters ⁹

⁷ About five words are canceled.

⁸ See II, 399n.

⁹ See note 5.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

4 October 1809

London Oct 4. 1809

Dear John

I cannot, you see, help scribbling, however little I may have to say, whenever an opportunity offers of doing it without prejudice to your purse, which, if it be as low as mine, will need to be spared— I have again instanced the remarkable way in which all my difficulties are overcome—the remittance of 35£ from your Father was very useful to me and enabled me to provide comfortably for 2 Bills due yesterday & to day amounting to 59£—yesterday a remittance of 45£ came from Witherden and made me quite rich but behold this morning a Bill of 50£ which I had mis-calculated as due on the 14th instead of the 4th was presented and would have reduced me to an unpleasant dilemma but for M^r Witherden ¹—as it is I am well off and have rubbed off sooner than I expected a third Part of my Months dues— I have moreover had a very good Day to day and am quite flush again—this latter circumstance is to be attributed to the return of fine weather which has brought the gay Folks abroad after their long and irksome confinement—the weather has ever since you went indeed, been continually bad, and notwithstanding that, I have had very good Business, the receipts of the Month in retail being £267.15.—I hope and trust I shall do this month much more and that we shall be able to meet November comfortably—what a life of Cares is a life of Business—from the Experience I have of what our Cares are I am sure I should be miserable indeed had I the serious weight of some of

¹ Perhaps John Witherdin, auctioneer.

the great Houses in the City on my Shoulders Poor Frederick ² will not long bear up under the load of his Copper Concern—you certainly (or rather we) halloo'd before you got out of the wood, when you in your letters congratulated Fred on his improved Spirits—before your Letters to Dick ³ & myself arrived, Fred had relapsed into all his wonted despondency, and to hear the quotations read to him speaking of his much improved state of mind, of his great gaiety and his return to a sense of the happiness of his situation in Life when he was sitting by with a countenance more rueful than ever, was the finest burlesque possible— Had you intended to quiz poor Fred most keenly you would scarcely have hit upon a finer expedient— This very day he dined with me, and a more miserable object than he was when he came into the Shop I never saw— This rascally uncle of his has taken him in completely and will not let him be off the Bargain—the circumstance dwells on Fred's mind & makes him more miserable than ever— The Business is extending very much—the capital they have is rather small and as their risks are very large and their Payments quick his Anxiety has food enough to exercise it while his Fortitude lies like old rusty Armour which he would never think of using— I sent him away again pretty merry to 'Change— Indeed I believe it was a change for the worse for he would certainly be melancholy enough again before he got home—he finds so many rascals in the world, sees every body so intent upon his own interests, and every one so sharp on the look out to take in his neighbour that he is become more & more disgusted with the world & will I doubt not, very soon in a fit of spleen quit London entirely As for you & me, I hope we shall be endued with proper Spirit to enable us to pass thro' the troubles of the world with comfort to our-selves & not altogether without benefit to others— To our

² Falkner? See II, 377n., and see the comments on "poor George," II, 387.

³ Falkner? See II, 390n.

friends it will be satisfactory to see us prosper and by ourselves the fruits of an honest industry will be enjoyed without the galling reflection of "many a wretch undone"—Your health will I hope be reestablished so as to enable you to enjoy London when you return & not merely to endure it as you have so long done—The House will be very soon comfortable and fit to receive its Lord & Lady if you can find one in the Country to bring with you—nothing would I assure you give me greater Pleasure for you have now lost all Chance at Hadley Oh what a world this is! Who would have thought that the *one* Woman who was to rescue the Sex from the Imputations which have from time to time been thrown upon them, should thus have proved herself a "very very—peacock"⁴—Is there such a thing as love to be found among them, or do the cold prudential maxims and instructions of Maiden Aunts & Grandmothers extinguish all the finer feelings of their Souls—you know more about them than I do but I still hope there are a few to be found who would think and act more nobly If you are at Retford when this arrives you will arrange the Prices of the Books with your father & take a copy of the particulars for me to regulate my Account here by— I need scarcely repeat my remembrances to Father Mother Sisters, Brothers, [. . .],⁵ G.S. & all friends at Retford and above all to yourself nor have I much need of adding that I am very truly & sincerely

Your affectionate Friend

JAHessey

Remember me to little Sam— I hope to have a good Account of him when you return.

⁴ *Hamlet*, III. ii. 295.

⁵ Two initials (?) illegible. On G.S. see II, 387n.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

9 May 1810

Address: Mr. John Taylor.

(PRIVATE)

Fleet St <April 6>. May 9th 1810. London

Dear John

I know how to make allowances for most things which the world accounts worthy of reprehension, as I am conscious of being or having been at one time or other liable to animadversion myself on the same grounds—but I must confess I was at a loss how to account for your long silence and particularly for your omitting to send me a Line by your fellow Traveller¹ or by Mr Mills—but your Letter has at last arrived and explained all—The attractions of Claverton have taken such possession of your mind and affections that you have no Room for any thing beside—those affections which have so long been the sport of every gaudy Toy are at last fixed, for a time at least, on an object worthy of them, if I attribute the description you have given to the proper person or if the description itself be correct—I was for a long time doubtful of the application of it and have read and compared many times before I determined it could be like to none but F——. You will perhaps say, as all lovers do, “could there be a moments hesitation!”—I think there might, for notwithstanding the high Character you have given to the fair one who has captivated you, I think in her absence as much might be said with equal Truth of many (or at least of some) of the other Inhabitants of the Valley—I have often told you how much I was struck by what little I saw of her, and

¹ Perhaps Mr. Cummings: see II, 378n.

sincerely regretted that I had not opportunities of seeing more— Those opportunities you have,—avail yourself of them, but let it be to Some purpose—you will not I know decide rashly, but be not too scrupulous— Piety, Good Sense and Beauty secured, what further would you seek for—all these may perhaps be found separately much nearer home, with something more *glittering* added to the account, but it is not easy to find them all united— I do not know if this latter accomplishment subsist in great abundance in the possession of your fair one, but such other qualities supersede the necessity of it in a great degree— A Woman of really Good Sense, and with the real principles of a Christian will seek for similar qualities in a husband, and finding such, will be prepared to accompany him through whatever Scenes it may please Providence to place him in— In such a Woman you are secure against the motive so generally prevalent with the Sex in matters of Matrimony— A Settlement, an Equipage, an Elevation of Rank and Circumstances, are not the objects of her pursuit— She will not give her hand unless she can bestow her heart with it, and “Oh! what a heart was that to lillies

give”— But pray what do you think of the other ladies of the Valley—has Retirement wrought any improvement in those whom you knew before, and do you find that they stand equally high in your estimation notwithstanding your new accession of acquaintance And in the others of that new acquaintance do you find powers of mind and gifts of heart any way resembling what you have so pleasingly described in one— The open and unreserved manners of both families will afford you fine opportunities of reading Character and I know no one who understands that language better than yourself— I expect therefore to profit by your observations and I shall be glad to hear from you by Letter the first opportunity you have. I am glad to find you have got your eyes opened—mind you keep them open—love

generally performs an operation of a contrary nature, delighting to make his votaries like himself till Hymen pitying the poor wandering mortals removes the veil from their Eyes and presents them with a prospect of which they had little expectation—I certainly think with you that your only chance of happiness, as far as depends on human circumstances, is in that state which our great Creator “commands to some, leaves free to all” ²—The same superintending Power which we have delighted to trace in the vicissitudes of Business will not fail to direct us in this momentous concern— If we will but place our confidence in him, and ask his direction with sincerity, he will not suffer us to injure ourselves in an affair of so much importance to us both here and hereafter, since he does not disdain to be our guide in the daily concerns of Life— I can only add that few things would give me more real pleasure than to see you united with a woman in every way worthy of you, and as I am saying this only to yourself it will not wear the imputation of flattery The Hey-day of youthful jollity is gone by—the foolish pleasures of the world have been weighed and found wanting— The heart feels and always will feel a void which can be filled only in one way— That you may be happy enough to hit the right way, whether it be in Claverton or Piccadilly is the sincere Wish of D^r John Your most affect^d Friend

—H.

One thing I would add for your Special observance— You have seen little of the Bath Folks—do not neglect them as I did— They have a high respect for you and would feel hurt at any appearance of slight on your part—this is a sacrifice which I had not courage to make, and I have heartily repented of it since— I fear also, you have seen but little of the Hunts—but they will have left Bath by this time— *Don't shew this to any one*

² *Paradise Lost*, IV.747.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

31 July 1810

Address: Mr John Taylor. A brief passage is quoted by Blunden, pp. 27f.

Fleet St July 31. 1810

My dear John

The pleasure of hearing from you was greatly damped by the melancholy intelligence which you give me of Mrs Johnson¹— I have shewn your Letter to Patrick² who promised to send you a few lines by this parcel but he waits for your Letter to him before he Speaks decisively—he is himself very far from well again— I thought he was fast recovering and he was of the same opinion but for the last 3 or 4 nights his attacks of fever and violent perspiration have returned and he now droops again—so long an illness is enough to make one droop though it is but trifling compared with what many are obliged to bear— I rejoice much that my prescription had so good an effect— I sent another Dose on Saturday night which I hope has been of service and I have now to add that I am going on very well—as well as you could well wish— Our Journey is entirely changed as to its plan and I have now almost given up any plans at all they are so uncertain as to execution— Poor George³ is now confined to his Foundry for some Weeks by their Warehouseman leaving them on Saturday next— He had made all arrangements with his Uncle and was to have started with me to Bath immediately after your return to Town but he must now of necessity stay some time to drill his new Man to the duties of

¹ A sister of Taylor's: see II, 407n.

² See II, 376n.

³ Possibly George Stothert, of Bath, whom Woodhouse later calls a "blacksmith." See I, 118, II, 383n.

his Office— I have therefore written this day to Fred ⁴ to propose to him to come immediately to Town and stay here a few days—then go down to Retford & Bakewell and return thro' Derby &c to Bath where George will by that time be ready to meet us and will then return with me to Town— If Fred relishes this proposal all Will be well and the Plan which Sarah ⁵ had chalked out for us will be followed exactly

Mrs Stothert is expected in Town this Evening to see her Son William (and introduce him to Parson W——d) *risum teneatis?* ⁶

You say you are likely to leave the Country better than when you entered it and I suppose by what follows you do not confine the word *better* to your health—if so I shall indeed rejoice that you have made this Journey— Many a man fancies himself as good as he can be till a still small voice ⁷ convinces him of the contrary—when the contrary is once distinguished there is hope of amendment for they that are whole need not a Physician but they that are sick ⁸— Your friend G—— S—— ⁹ may be a Calvinist but I dare aver he is a much better man and though there may be something narrow and unsocial in the principles of Calvin (with which however I am not very well acquainted) yet they inculcate serious and important Duties which cannot fail to improve the heart and amend the Life of any man who fully understands and espouses them— The Religion of Calvin or the Religion of Luther, or that of Wesley or that of Whitfield are improper distinctions— Paul may plant and Apollos water but God giveth the increase ¹⁰—if therefore

⁴ See II, 377n.

⁵ Possibly Taylor's sister Sarah: see I, cxxxix.

⁶ Horace, *Ars Poetica*, line 5.

⁷ I Kings 19:12.

⁸ Matthew 9:12; Mark 2:17.

⁹ See note 3.

¹⁰ I Corinthians 3:6.

we see the increase we should not designate men by the names of any sect or at any rate not stigmatize them with such names— It were well if they would not do it themselves for while they are zealously contending for particular opinions in points of doctrine in themselves unessential, they often leave unattended to the more important doctrines of Christianity— They tythe the mint and anise and cummin¹¹ while they omit the weightier matters, judgment, mercy & faith— — But again to Business— The Lady of the Lake¹² is not yet arrived— I believe ours were shipped at Edinburgh on Friday last so that we may expect them daily— Blackwood¹³ has paid for his Medical Registers and I have this day been negotiating an exchange with him of all our Medical Books— — Poor Swan has lost his House again and Gillett his printing Office¹⁴—luckily I did not hear any thing of the fire till six o’Clock on Sunday Morn^g when it was pretty well got under—the flakes of burnt wood and paper lay in large quantities on our leads but did us no damage—the Fire has broken out again this afternoon to keep the Firemen employed but it is nice showery weather for the occasion—

Give my best regards to all friends at your house—don’t forget to enquire about Horses and let me hear from you as I must advise Fred before he sets off—

All desire to be remembered to you

Believe me Yr affect Friend

JAH

¹¹ Matthew 23:23.

¹² Scott’s poem, published by the Ballantynes in 1810.

¹³ See No. 61.

¹⁴ On July 29 “a destructive fire broke out at Mr. Gillet’s printing-office, in Salisbury Square, Fleet Street. The premises had been rebuilt, at great expence, after a former calamity of the same kind, in 1805. Several neighbouring houses were greatly damaged” (*Annual Register* for 1810, p. 271).

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

12 October 1810

Address: Mr. Taylor/ 93 Fleet St/ London. *Postmark:* E 13 OC 13 1810.

Dear John

I have not many minutes to spare before post Time to say that I received your Letter two or three days since and should have answered it immediately but could not find Spirits to set about it— I hope to hear from you that you are better in Spirits and more comfortable in Business than I suppose you were when you last wrote, but I charge you by your friendship for me that you tell me sincerely how you are going on— I could have wished your last letters had been more explicit respecting Business and your own Health which last I fear may have been somewhat injured by the former—by telling me the true state of the Case you will relieve me from much anxiety— We had a grand Jubilee at Claverton last Night, the Harvest Home and as it was the first Farmers Harvest Home I had seen, I experienced as you may imagine much Pleasure at seeing the innocent Gaiety of the Men & Women of the Village who were present join(ing) in the cry of “Health unto our Measter{.”} I shall if nothing prevent, leave this place on Tuesday next and be in Town in a Fortnight at the utmost—if you can do so long without me— I am very well and have the happiness of seeing all well about me—they all join me in wishing you the same and all our friends in Town— Remember me affect^y to Dick ¹ & Believe me

Your aff^t Friend

JAH

Bath Oct 12 1810

Let me Hear from you P. return

¹ See II, 382, note 3.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

10 May 1811

Address: Mr Taylor/ Bath.

Fleet Street. May 10. 1811

Dear John

Your fellow Traveller ¹ was here with me yesterday and entertained me exceedingly with Part the Second of the Journey to Bath— The drollery of the Adventures and his droll manner of relating them produced some hearty fits of Laughter, and I find the blades in Bruton Street have enjoyed the same Diversion at your Expense— Joseph ² got home exactly to his time but not without a tumble—the Rogue of a Horse came down with him just in the same manner as with you, but Joe being I suppose more agile he did not suffer as you did. The Horse fortunately did not graze off a Hair and his rider was equally in luck— I told him of the Prowess of his Nag, how he had contrived to outwit the Doctor— I tremble to think what would have become of Bobs patients at Claverton & Bath if he had not fortunately fallen on a *Soft place*— You must be cautious how you play tricks with this modern Bucephalus—

I cannot help pitying you every hour of the Day on the appearance of every Shower—<this Day> yesterday it <has> rained almost incessantly from Morning to Night, and Such Weather is not more favorable to Business in London than to pleasurable excursions in the Country—but you are not confined to the dirty back Parlour of a miserable Inn with nothing to amuse you but reading the Inscriptions on the Windows, and adding to the number— You have pleasant Society, the

¹ This phrase is earlier (see I, 378) applied to one Cummings.

² Possibly Joseph Bonsor: see II, 395n.

charms of female Conversation and the heart cheering intercourse of Friendship to make amends for the gloom without, and, as you have not "*like I have*" 3 miles to walk before you can see a green field you can catch the amusement which the short gleams of sunshine offer for a Ramble between the Showers— Thinking on this Subject I can almost fancy I see again the beautiful Rainbow which so captivated us all last Autumn one Sunday afternoon on the opposite side of the Valley— I dare say Fred ³ remembers it well—then well may I who have not seen a Rainbow since

Mr. Mills ⁴ gives me a very poor Account of Mrs Mills and a still worse one of Mrs Frank White ⁵— There are no hopes entertained of her Recovery as she has all the symptoms of the most confirmed Consumption—besides which Mrs White sen^r is very ill, Miss Mills is very ill, and a little Niece of Mills's has broken her Arm—thus there are five persons ill in one House— The Accounts from Bakewell ⁶ are better— Tyms the Taylor brought a Letter on Saturday from James and was to take back an answer on Tuesday but as I had not heard from you I did not write—but when I received your Letter on Wednesday and found that James had it in contemplation to come to London I ventured to open his Letter to see if I was really to expect him or not and am well pleased to find he postpones his Journey. The Letter from Bessy ⁷ came with the Order on Monday and one from Geo. Suter, by post— I have been expecting a cargo of Letters by a Waggon Parcel Some days—if they arrive before post time I will enclose them— I have told your Father that you had set off for Bath for a few days to get a little fresh Air

³ See II, 377n.

⁴ See II, 384.

⁵ See II, 400, 414.

⁶ Taylor's brother James and his brother-in-law Johnson were in business in this Derbyshire village.

⁷ Perhaps Taylor's sister Elizabeth.

and a little colour in your Face— I know it to be a capital place to get *fat* in— I shall also send the Intelligence of your Absence to Bakewell to day— Nobody in London is at all surprised at your stay, and I have no right to say any thing against it— Business, what little there is (and that is little enough) goes on very well without you— I think it is about time we were settled at home—this Rambling would then be over, “No more a Rover, or hapless lover,” and we might then add, “Those cares are over, my griefs are gone” ⁸— Poor Ned gets worse daily and I regret to say I have not been able to see him since I wrote to you last, but I purpose going this Ev^e if possible— Hilton has finished one of the portraits of Richard in Oil for John Windle—it is excellent—do you mean to have one done to send to Retford?— Money gets more & more scarce in London, and this bad weather has reduced the poor Rogues, who like us, depend on the supplies of the Day, to Despair—

Let me hear from you as often as you [can]— Fred & Bob ⁹ are scurvy fellows for not writing— You may however give my affectionate Regards to them and to all the Folks at the Farm— I must also be remembered kindly to our friends at the Rectory,¹⁰ & at Bath I would not willingly be forgotten— You will believe me when I say I am as usual your affectionate Friend

J.A.H

⁸ Misquoted from John Philpot Curran (1750–1817), “Let Us Be Merry” (*Dublin Book of Irish Verse* [1924], ed. John Cooke, p. 6), “No more a rover, or hapless lover, My griefs are over—my glass runs low.”

⁹ The Falkners.

¹⁰ The family of the Reverend Harvey Marriott, of Claverton: see I, 37n.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

14 June 1811

Address: Mr. John Taylor/ Mess. Johnson & Taylor/ Bakewell/ Derbyshire. *Postmark:* C JU 14 [1]811.¹ A few sentences are printed by Blunden, p. 28.

Fleet Street June 14. 1811

Dear John

I am sorry you give yourself so much cause to reproach you for leaving old Letters unanswered— I can assure you many others might be disposed to join in the cry of shame but you escape on the pitiful principle of an established character for want of punctuality—a good name is often a mans friend and there is a pleasure in receiving the good offices of such a Friend; but is disgraceful enough to receive protection from a bad one, and to consider that the lash is Spared only because one is incorrigible— I hope you will take these things into consideration and remember what Cato said to the Romans in reproof of their luxurious habits—“If it is by virtue and temperance that you are become great, change not for the worse; but if by intemperance and vice, change for the better; for you are already great enough by such means as these” ²—

I have heard from the Claverton Colony twice—from Bob & Fred ³ on two successive Days—they are all very well and my two Gentlemen have amused me with a fine String of apologies for not writing— By the way, a double fraud on his Friends is committed by a dilatory Correspondent— He omits writing for

¹ Compare the note at I, 262.

² See “Cato the Censor,” *Plutarch's Lives*, translated by John and William Langhorne, III (1808), 135.

³ See II, 382n.

a long time, and when he does write he has so much apologizing to do that he fills two thirds of his letter with it and leaves you little wiser or better. <for it>— I have taken John Grants Seal to Smith & Asprey ⁴ and desired them to make a perfect Job of it without regarding a few Guineas in the Expence of the Engraving—it will cost five or Six Guineas to be done very well and it is better so than to pay three Guineas for doing it ill—Franks ⁵ Commissions are all in Train— I have been out this morning and put the finishing hand to them and in the next week all will be completed and sent off— I had a Letter from him yesterday with a most seasonable remittance of £160— I say most seasonable, for I have more than that sum to pay next week and was reduced almost *au desespoir*—but this is another signal instance of that providential care which has so often saved us under difficulties and will I hope and trust continue to do so till this alarming Time be overpast— Every one complains in London—for my own part I am going on very well except two evils which beset me, Want of Business and want of Money— I am going to make a hard push for the former and if I succeed in that the latter will come of course—but I foresee a very dull Summer and I should like to provide against it if possible—and to this effect I wished to suggest the procuring from your father if you can do it (or if you think I can), a few hundred pounds in short notes for which we can give him ours at a little longer period. <for security>— For Instance, Bills at 2 or 3 Months would be cash to us, and we can give Bills at 8 or 10 or 12 Months, as long as he can Spare, adding the difference of Interest—let me hear from you by return with your opinion on this point— Joseph Bonsor ⁶ has been a very good Friend but I have

⁴ See II, 377n.

⁵ Presumably Frank Falkner, for whom see II, 377n.

⁶ Wholesale stationer, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, often mentioned by Hessey. See II, 427n.

fortunately had little occasion to trouble him—he is an excellent fellow and I esteem him the more as I become more acquainted with him— I do not doubt that he would come into a plan of this sort but as he is so useful to us in many other ways I am fearful of intruding too far on him—— I have been making preparations with a view to Stock-taking (which I dare say Charles ⁷ & I shall be able to manage) and I find that our Return for the Year will be full as much as the last was notwithstanding the badness of Business in general—and as our Expenses have not been greater and our Stock is more select we may hope for a good Balance These little items will please the good Folks and give them confidence—we are certainly not now going back in the world—another year of tolerable success will bring us up the Hill very comfortably, and if by pushing our Business we can increase it, as I am sure we may if we unite our efforts, we may then turn our Thoughts to other Things of more pleasing Interest—

You are provokingly mysterious in the affair of the young Lady— I am sorry you thought it necessary to blot out what you first thought worth writing—do you mean to say that you have excited no Interest in her heart in your favor, or that you have taken no pains to do so— Then I shall say you have been mispending your Time— “You infer—”! I hope you have not been playing *Will Asprey* ⁸ with me, or I shall get into a pretty scrape which is very far from being my wish for I am as undetermined as ever— Anne Stothert ⁹ has just received pleasant Intelligence from Bath—she is to go home and stay there the Vacation over, and go to Birmingham with her Father and Sisters afterwards— this is just what she wished and has made her quite happy— she seems now pretty well reconciled to her prospects— She desires

⁷ Presumably Charles Banckes (see II, 406n.).

⁸ See II, 377n.

⁹ See II, 387n.

me to remember her very particularly to your Sisters and yourself— She is constant in her inquiries after Mrs Johnson,¹⁰ as indeed is every body who knows her— Henry Clarke sent every day for the last fortnight and I was quite sorry I could give him no Intelligence—pray don't let it be so again— It is satisfactory to be able to say I have heard even if there be no alteration in Mrs Johnsons Health— I despair of her recovery—but am happy to find there is a prospect of her continuing some time longer with you—the evil day must come, but it is natural to wish to defer it as long as possible— Pray remember me in the kindest manner possible to her— I wish I could find out any thing that would please her—if you think of any thing mention it—remember me also to your Mother & Sarah & Robert & James— I do not understand if you mean the Glasses to be sent to Matlock or Retford— I suppose the former— I will get them made immediately— I saw Percival¹¹ this morning, and all the Folks in Bond St—they are all well and send a host of good wishes and shakes of the hand for you all, especially Mrs J——¹² M^r Powley¹³ is in the Country attending his Brother who lived in Bond St and who is in the same state as your Sister, expected to die every day— Edw^d Windle¹⁴ is still alive— D^r Patrick¹⁵ is very well—he has had some experiments made on his eyes by D^r Wells¹⁶ and he bores me to Death with Optical Demonstrations of which he knows just so much as he has heard D^r Wells say and no more, and kindly insists on my knowing the same. He is a goodnatured Fellow, and desires best remembrances to you all—

¹⁰ See II, 407n.

¹¹ See I, 38n.

¹² See II, 407n.

¹³ See II, 400f.

¹⁴ See II, 401.

¹⁵ See II, 376n.

¹⁶ William Charles Wells (1757–1817), physician to St. Thomas' Hospital, author of treatises on eyesight.

I suppose you have seen the advertisement of the Monopoly Shop in Bond St— Longman, Cadell and White have fitted up a Suite of Rooms for the exhibition of the Drawings made for Treshams Gallery¹⁷ and for the Sale of Books in superb bindings &c and they mean to cut us all out The Pictures are certainly beautiful and they will cause that Work to sell, but the Book establishment is a most disgraceful thing for them to undertake and I much doubt if it will answer. You may be sure I dont wish them much success Pray let me hear from you by return that I may know where to send the glasses, and in answer to my Queries

Believe me D^r John Your affectionate Friend

J A Hessey

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

24 June 1811

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Retford.

Fleet St June 24. 1811

Dear John

If my last letter¹ had the effect of making you determine to return immediately it acted without my instructions and certainly in opposition to my Intention— I would not on any account, as your Sisters end seems so near, have you cause her a moments uneasiness by leaving her as long [as] she lives to enjoy

¹⁷ "Messrs. Longman and Co. have a cabinet devoted to rare and unique books behind their wholesale establishment in Paternoster row" (*The Picture of London, for 1815*, p. 344). The prospectus for Henry Tresham and W. Y. Ottley's *British Gallery of Pictures* was issued in 1808; the work itself was completed in 1818.

¹ Of June 14, preceding.

your Company ²— I have so little to do at home that I think I shall find little difficulty in getting through the Stock without your Assistance— I shall begin the Quires to morrow and get all I can finished this week so as to make the Job lighter on Monday— I have but little doubt that we shall find the Balance a good one— To the particulars which I gave you in my last the following information may be added—for the last nine weeks the average Till account has been 90/11/— p[er] week— Mr Phipps ³ has been a very good Customer, and now keeps two binders at work— Mr Filchett ⁴ has also been a very good Customer, principally in binding—he has had about 40£ to pay, part of which is still due— Mr Smith has not yet pd for his Splendid Books but I expect his money this week—thus with half a dozen tolerably good regular Customers and those whom accident throws in my way I continue to scrape on—

Anne ⁵ left London on Thursday Morning, and as the Coach had a vacant Seat and the morning was fine I rode with her as far as Hounslow; then mounted another Coach and rode back again as far as Hammersmith where I found an Asylum and took some Refreshment; and then had the pleasure of escorting two young Ladies into Town, Harriet & Sophia— I need not add that with such Companions my walk was a pleasant one— I found at Doughty S^t Amelia & Mrs N. ⁶ so that I had the opportunity of paying my respects to the whole Family at once—they are all very well— Harriet looks very pale, as usual, and Sophia is not a whit less gay than when you were wont to exercise your wits to amuse her—but Amelia is in appearance the Flower of the Flock and in a more genial Soil than London

² For Mrs. Johnson, of Bakewell, see II, 397, 407.

³ Perhaps Thomas Phipps, bookseller, 4 Cleveland Street, Fitzroy Square.

⁴ Or *perhaps* Fitchett. (Neither name appears in any accessible directory.)

⁵ Anne Stothert (see II, 396n.).

⁶ Possibly Mrs. Noble and her sisters (see II, 380).

would flourish though I fear her growth will soon stop here like that of all natures Productions in London

Tom King was not a little pleased to find his old Flame married— Mr Legg is a serious Man and I suppose was introduced in the same manner as King was— King has also lightened himself of another Burden—he has disposed of his Business and upon very good Terms—he has sold the Lease of his House for 100£ more than he gave for it 8 Years ago, and his Stock, furniture and Fixtures are all taken by the parties coming in—the Stock at Invoice prices and the Fixtures &c at Valuation— The parties are a Young Man who has just left the Army on Acc^t of ill health and a Young Man who was for Many years with Mr King of Marylebone— To morrow Evening the Accounts will be made up and the first Instalment paid—the whole will be cleared off within the Year— I am glad he is rid of it— A Business that after 8 Years hard lab{or} is as far from comfort as at it's Commencement is better let alone—if his Capital had been *his own* it might have done very well—the Business supported him, but he had no prospect of paying it off and had every reason to expect being speedily called upon for a great part of it— He looks quite happy now his burthens are removed though he has no immediate prospect of any other Settlement

By all means advertise— I send some papers which I meant some time ago to send to your Father—it is as cheap to advertise all at once as one, or nearly so. I want very much to advertise here in Town but can scarcely spare the needful—perhaps your Father can Spare a remittance next week as I have rather a heavy payment to make—but this is only to yourself— Remember me very kindly to all at Retford, and Bakewell when you return there— I was disappointed in the Glasses last Week but I shall have them on Thursday and will send them directly— I can scarcely hope better Accounts of Mrs F. White— Mr Pow-

ley and Edw^d Windle⁷ are much the same as last Week— The doctor⁸ desires to be rem^d to all

Your aff^t Friend J A Hessey

Where is the poetry you promised me— I have not seen any of the amatory Kind a long while and feel curious for a little of the old sport—

“O Woman Woman, lovely fair

An Angels form’s fall’n to thy share

T’wad been owre mickle to ha’ gi’en thee mair

I mean an Angel-mind”⁹

Is it so?—But who is Fanny’s Swain? You give me no news from Bath

Mrs Hunter has blessed Job with another little Wench. Happy *Job!*—And Job has brought forth a new Song

»» 310 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

2 July 1811

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Retford.

Fleet S. July 2. 1811

Dear John

I was surprised at not receiving the usual Letter from Retford on Monday and began to fear all was not well but yours of this day has put all to rights— I send you Withering¹ and great part of the order— The Linen I shall keep till tomorrow

⁷ For these persons see II, 397.

⁸ Samuel Patrick.

⁹ Burns, “She’s Fair and Fause,” lines 15-16.

¹ William Withering, *A Botanical Arrangement of All the Vegetables Naturally Growing in Great Britain* (2 vols., 1776). The fourth edition, corrected and enlarged by his son William, 4 vols., was issued at London in 1801.

to send with it any part, that may not be ready to day, of the Books—the Magazines went off on Saturday as many as were pub^d— I have Sent the Quarterly Account, adding to it one or two things which were omitted— I cannot find that the Catalogues were charged any where so I have put them down at what Mr Hood ² charged for the printing of the add^l 500 and Bonsor for the Paper— Mr Foljambes Catalogue has not been charged at all—that you can Settle with y^r Father— I scarcely expected to hear of your being still at Retford, as Mrs Johnsons health is so uncertain, but I am glad to find the Accounts of her are no worse ³— So you are going to dip into the profound mysteries of Botany— The Doctor ⁴ laughed heartily when I told him you wanted Withering, and said he thought your Botanical Ardour would soon enough be withering without his assistance— The Rev^d Richard Hutchinson ⁵ M.A. is in Town, and dined with me yesterday— He has been taking his degree at Cambridge and came away just time enough to miss the Installation ⁶— I really think he might be made a decent fellow if he were to be in Town a little Time—

If we were to succeed the Clarendon Press Bookseller in his unhappy Fate as well as his Business I should beg leave to decline attempting— You may recollect that he gave security to Cuthell for Martins Debt, and afterwards to Constable for their Stock which Martin purchased ⁷— It is believed he found that

² Thomas Hood: see I, 375n.

³ See II, 407n.

⁴ Patrick.

⁵ He is not listed in H. R. Luard's *Graduati Cantabrigienses* (1873) or John Venn and J. A. Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (1922).

⁶ Of the Duke of Gloucester as chancellor, June 28-July 3. See the *Gentleman's Magazine*, July (LXXXI, 35-39).

⁷ John Cuthell was a bookseller of 4 Middle Row, Holborn, and Constable the Edinburgh publisher. Booksellers and stationers named J. Martin, Patrick Martin, and William Martin are listed in the *Post Office London Directory*, 1814.

he was likely to be called upon to pay the Bills which he had given; and not being able to bear the Thought of appearing before his Creditors he chose the more desperate Step of rushing into the Presence of his God— He left home on the Saturday Morning⁸ and drowned himself I believe, in the Paddington Canal— Joseph Bonsor is a Creditor to the Amo^t of between three and four Hundred Pounds and was very melancholy when he first heard of the Circumstance, but I believe he will get a good part of his Debt— and it is supposed there is a good deal of property to pay with— Keanleys⁹ Sale takes place to morrow, and a very poor Catalogue it makes—he has been reducing his Stock it would seem a good while—there is nothing that we want— —Constable is in Town getting his Accounts Settled—his Deputy Mr Charles H—— did not make much progress— Mr Joseph Saunders from Liverpool is also in Town— He is a nice young fellow of the Oakes School— Hilton and his Sister are gone to Lincoln— Patrick does not think Mrs Dewint is at present in Danger, but he Says she will be if she remains in London— Hilton has got the prize and Dewint is very busy— Hilton has made a very fine Sketch for a large Picture of the Death of the First Born in Egypt— Edward Windle¹⁰ remains as nearly as possible in the same State and Patrick thinks he will now live till the Autumn— He suffers a good deal more than poor Rich^d [?] did—he has been confined to his bed almost ever since you left Town and is terribly annoyed by his Cough—

⁸ Apparently June 29. The only suicide noticed in the *Morning Chronicle* (July 6 and 9) and the *Morning Post* (July 8) is "Richard Lee, Esq. of Highbury-place," "a gentleman of the highest mercantile character and credit," who drowned himself in the New River, July 4. My friend, Dr. Leslie Hotson, tells me that there is no notice of the suicide in *The Times* or in the inquests kept at the London Guildhall or at the Middlesex Guildhall.

⁹ So apparently but not identified.

¹⁰ See II, 397n.

Mr Scotts New Poem ¹¹ will be up in a short time. I have received Advice to day of their being Shipped—

I must here finish this cargo of News with the agreeable Intelligence that I and my household are all well— Remember me most kindly to all at Retford & believe me D^r John

Yours Sincerely J A H

Remember me to H.H. & G.S.¹²

»» 311 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

19 October 1813

Address: M^r John Taylor.

Fleet S.¹ Oct 19, '13

My dear John

I have scarcely five minutes left in which I can write to you and as it happens I have nothing of Importance to say— I am going to take tea with Andrews & his Sister— Kate & Dru [?] ² of course are going with me— Hilton & C^o ³ are returned to Town and drank Tea with us on Sunday— The lasses seem uncommonly well pleased with them, as indeed they are generally with all our Set of Friends— They are very well and we all

our

desire their kindest remembrances to you all— The Types are enclosed in this Parcel— When shall I see a Proof— Yours ever truly

J A Hessey

take care of the enclosed I send it as an apology or rather a Substitute

¹¹ *The Vision of Don Roderick.*

¹² See II, 408, 387.

¹ *Or perhaps St.*

² Hessey's wife and her sister (?): see I, cxxxix.

³ See the preceding letter.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

17 December 1813

Address: Mr John Taylor.

Fleet St Dec: 17, 1813

My dear John

I have been fortunate enough to find the very prayer Book you wanted and have therefore dispatched the Parcel this Evening—and I have also added a few smart Books for Presents as p[er] Bill— I could not get into the Box all that are looked out & charged, so the remainder will be sent with the next Parcel— If I have sent more than are necessary or such as are not liked you can bring them up with you when you return home— I have not had time to make any of the Inquiries respecting Stephens &c ¹ so you must wait till I have more leisure

I was surprised & shocked to hear of M^r Suters ² Death and yet it was a desirable Event after what had happened previously— M^r Gould was here a few weeks ago to see you—she had at that time no Idea of her Mother being at all dangerously ill—she seemed much more comfortable than when I had seen her before; but her Husband, she said, has no employ

The Quarto Bible is published—the three Shares produce 90 Medium and 60 royal—the particulars are now copying for your father to see—the first call was paid six Months ago—for the remainder I have given a Bill and received the Books— You will determine with him what is to be done— I shall send a copy of each by tomorrows Waggon as Specimens

I have made an Agreement with Hookhams ³ to further

¹ Possibly Stephens and Son, stationers, 35 Throgmorton Street.

² George Suter is mentioned above (see II, 392).

³ Thomas Hookham and Sons, stationers, with a circulating library, at 15 Old Bond Street.

the Sale of Husseys Letters—viz—to exchange our Vol. for theirs, one against the other—to reprint the Titles of both Volumes making them Vols 1 & 2 and to engrave a frontispiece from the Picture originally painted for the Work—these additions and the Advertising to be done at our Joint expense and the Conduct and subscribing to be left to us—we shall call the two Volumes *third Edition*, and write to M^r Hussey for an Advertisement and Errata ⁴— I think the Book may be pushed off by these means—it has stood very still for some time—what do you think of it—we shall sell the two volumes for 9/— We shall have some Maternal Solicitude bound to send you tomorrow— I think it seems likely to sell— I have sent it to all the Reviews ⁵

The last time we heard from Miss Banckes she {was} much better—almost able to walk—she {ha}s just lost her Grandfather—he died the very same day poor William departed—What effect this might have upon her we cannot tell Charles ⁶ apprehends it may retard her recovery—

All are very well here and desire their kindest regards to all your family— We have heard from Miss Sampson—she will

⁴ The British Museum catalog lists editions of 1809 and 1811 of William Hussey's *Letters from an Elder to a Younger Brother on the Conduct to Be Pursued in Life*. (There was a Boston, Massachusetts, edition in 1810.) The edition here referred to was published in two volumes on March 1, 1814, according to the *New Monthly Magazine* of that date (I, 163).

⁵ *Maternal Solicitude for a Daughter's Best Interests* (1813), by Ann Taylor (1782–1866), of Ongar (afterwards Mrs. Joseph Gilbert), got good reviews and sold excellently. A second edition was announced by the *New Monthly Magazine*, March 1, 1814 (I, 163), and a twelfth appeared in 1825. Ann Taylor and Jane Taylor (1783–1824), separately or in collaboration, wrote various edifying works that Taylor and Hessey published and profited by (see II, 413, 421); as, *The Present of a Mistress to a Young Servant* (1816), *Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners* (1816), *Correspondence Between a Mother and Her Daughter at School* (1817), *Reciprocal Duties of Parents and Children* (1818), *Retrospection, A Tale* (1821).

⁶ Charles Banckes (see the next letter) was Hessey's clerk.

be with us next Tuesday⁷ Mr Bonsor is I believe gone to
<Yarmouth> Norwich—he will return next Wednesday— My
dear Kate joins me in best wishes to you all—& believe me D^r John

Yours ever affectionately

J A Hessey

»» 313 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

21 December 1813

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Retford.

London 21 Dec. 1813

My dear John

I am happy to hear you are all well at Retford, and that you have determined on assisting your Father in the Adjustment of his Accounts— I trust you will soon recover from the effects of your great Loss¹ and that all will go on as comfortably as usual— With me Business is very good and occupies my attention incessantly from Morning to Night— Charles Banckes is regularly installed my Clerk *pro tempore* and is fagging away every Evening— He has finished the Prayer Book Accounts & is now going to begin our own— I shall be glad of your assistance in the Cash way as soon as it is convenient—at present I go on very tolerably— I have not yet advertised the Mat- Solicitude² very much just yet—it will appear on the Magazines this Month, and I will thank you to get it inserted in those Papers you mention in the form which I send you as well as the Com. P. Book

⁷ December 21; see the next letter.

¹ Possibly this means that his sister, Mrs. Johnson (see II, 397, 402), had just died.

² See the preceding letter, note 5.

& Pennant³—two or three insertions of each will suffice— I'm sure T & N. charge a great Commission on their Advertisements— The Rev^d Isaac Taylor⁴ is very much pleased with the Plate—and seems very well satisfied with what I sent him. 6. I sent off on Friday a good assortment of Books & a few Painted ones among them—what I could not enclose in the Box are here-with sent & two or three more— Harris⁵ keeps us pretty well supplied—he assures me he has not done any for Longman⁶ nor will he—the Man at Halifax got them done by him to supply Longman but Harris says he will not do any more for him as he does not pay well and acts dishonourably also towards us— Harris seems to have behaved very well in the Business— The Portraits of illustrious Personages⁷ will suit us well— I have obtained six subscribers already by sending round the Letters— will it do at Retford?—H. Hutchinsons Chief Rents are Paid & I enclose you the Receipts—the Brandy was sent off from Eykyns⁸ by Permit on Friday— I have paid Gortz & settled with Smith—the knife is not yet done— Frank Hadens⁹ things are all gone off— Miss Sampson¹⁰ comes here tomorrow—she was to have been here to day but she sent to say she could not come

³ I have not seen Taylor and Hessey's Prayer Book. They published *A Copious Index to Pennant's Account of London* by Thomas Downes early in 1814.

⁴ Artist, author, inventor (1787–1865), father of Hessey's Misses Taylor (see No. 312, note 5).

⁵ Possibly William Harris, bookbinder, High Street, Shadwell.

⁶ Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, booksellers, 39 Paternoster Row.

⁷ By Edmund Lodge (1756–1839), *Lancaster Herald*. It is announced by the *New Monthly Magazine*, February 1, 1814 (I, 59), as in preparation and on June 1 (I, 457) as just published.

⁸ Eykyns, Browning, and Company, 7 Smithfield Bars, are listed in the *Post Office London Directory*, 1814, as merchants, and, 1819, as oil merchants.

⁹ See II, 377n.

¹⁰ See II, 406.

till to morrow— We had a visit to day from the Miss Gabriels who are at Laytonstonel they could not stay long but will come again in a few days— — Sam. Henry is left to his fate— I enclose you Philips Letter—I pity them both—

We received this morning the Baskets of Fowls one of which we have sent to M^r Bonsors— Your Father & Mother will accept our best thanks for them; and our best love, which will also extend to Sarah & Harry & yourself

My dear Kate is very well—all friends at Bath are also well—poor Anne Falkner of Sutton is we hear very ill and with scarcely any hope of recovery— M^{rs} Hodgkinson has another little Boy—she was amazingly well at her confinement but a few days ago had a very serious attack from which she has however recovered— Mr Bonsor is at Norwich Mr Maughan ¹¹ is not yet come to Town but I daily expect him—have you any objections to the Conditions of our Agreement or any thing to propose—if so write quickly— I always write to the last Moment which is now nearly arrived— Woodhouse is above stairs & desires to be kindly remembered—his Brother is come home *red Hot* from Cadiz ¹²— Farewell— Believe me Dear John, Ever mo. affect^y Yours

J A H

We charge 7 Prayers as six & the one we sent last being Reeves's is 1/6 dearer than the other—we did not know the price before and charged it at guess

¹¹ Possibly Richard Maugham, stationer, 46 Threadneedle Street.

¹² See I, cxliv.

»» 314 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR ¹

12 August 1814

Address: Mr Taylor.

Fleet Street Aug. 12, 1814

My dear John

I did not expect that the sight of the Sea would throw you into any of those Raptures or Perspirations of which we hear so much among the Novel Heroes & Heroines and among the Sons & Daughters of Sensibility— The period of Raptures of that kind is past for you and me—and indeed there are but few persons who have any command over their own Minds that are frequently affected in a manner so striking— Let your Idea however have been as grand as it might I am inclined to think you have found the Reality of the Sea surpass that Idea—and the various weather you have had will have shown you that wonderful Element in all its beauties— I should like you to see a Storm and you would then see a scene of Sublimity unequalled by any other species of sublunary Grandeur I have little news in the way of Business to give you—all is going on very well, and the same is the Case at Salisbury Square ²— A Letter will be enclosed for Mr Bonsor, to whom, as also to M^r Bonsor & family and your Visitors M^r Harris & his family present my best Compts and kind regards.—Mrs Falkner & Kate

¹ Written on the back in pencil, apparently by Taylor, is:

2 Shirts

6 N Cloths

2 pr Hose

2 Hkfs

1 N Cap

² Probably at Bonsor's shop.

and the little Boy are all very well and desire also to be kindly remembered— Mrs Wright gets better by slow degrees and Wright himself ³ has been very unwell— He was taken poorly on Tuesday Evening & on Wednesday Morning was so ill as that the Doctors Assistance was necessary and he was compelled to lie in bed all the Day—'tis nothing serious—only his Stomach paying him off part of the Old Score of abuse which he has lavished on that accommodating Organ of his— He talked yesterday Morning of accompanying his Wife to Eastbourne & staying there a week with her— I have not seen him since so I don't know whether he remains in the same Mind— I hope he will for M^{rs} Wrights Sake— She wants Country Air very much but she is not fit to go to the Sea alone Now for more serious Intelligence— The thing which we sometimes spoke of in Jest as not beyond the limits of possibility has actually taken place— Thomas and Sally are married—not *old* Sally—but young Sally— I never heard a word of it or any thing hinted which might have led me to a suspicion that such an Affair was in Agitation, till yesterday, when Charles ⁴ communicated to me his Suspicions that the Business was done, and an application to the Parish Register of S^t Anns Blackfriars ⁵ confirmed the truth of the Report— I do not know when I have been so seriously sorry for any circumstance as I am on this Occasion— That Sally should have acted so imprudently & improperly as to marry under a knowledge of all the Circumstances in which Thomas is placed by his former Indiscretion; and that Thomas should have forfeited so completely the good Opinion I was still disposed to entertain of him, and should precipitate himself & the unfortunate Girl into a Marriage which can promise nothing

³ He died before July 22, 1815 (see No. 315).

⁴ Banckes (see II, 406). For old Sally see I, 52.

⁵ The curate, William Howels, married Thomas Bennion (see II, 423, 446) and Sarah Powell by banns on July 24.

but unhappiness to both—all this is matter of serious regret to us all—and besides that we should lose the Services of two of the best Servants I ever knew, and, at this Critical period when we had just determined on going into the Country in a Week or two, to be reduced to the unpleasant necessity of seeking fresh Servants and going through all the undelightful parade of seeking Characters and finding none, is mortifying in an unusual degree— However the Die is cast and we must make the best of it— I do not yet know what their Plans are for I have not yet spoken to Thomas—but of course we cannot keep them any longer than until we can provide ourselves with others to fill their places— I shall speak to Tho^s this Evening and let you know the result either by this parcel or tomorrow—in the Mean time give me your opinion of this Matter by Return if you have time to write a line— Believe me D^r John

Yours mo sincerely J A Hessey

»» 315 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR ¹

22 July 1815

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Bakewell.

Fleet St. July 22. 1815

My dear John

The Manuscript accompanying this came by this Mornings Mail addressed to you— I have looked it through & send it now for your Inspection—it appears to me very common place and not very likely to attract quite so much notice as the author, like all others of his genus, anticipates. I think we might print it at his expense, but I hardly deem it worth publishing at our

¹ A note in Taylor's hand says: "Cancelled H C H's Note for 300£ & gave him on Demand [?] July 25, 1815 a Note for 250£." See II, 427, 432.

own—not that the expense of printing would be an object but the Advertising which a Pamphlet requires as much as an octavo Volume would be hardly repaid by the Sale— However use your own judgment & do as you think best, and answer Mr Mower ² from Bakewell—pray is he a Reverend?

Your Letter came safe with the Indenture in it. the Business is all settled satisfactorily and all goes on well— I am sorry to hear you talk of making so short a stay with the Friends you so seldom see in the Country— I have no occasion for your presence here—indeed I can hardly keep all my present hands employed— Business is however pretty tolerable—as good, or nearly so, as is usual at this Time of Year Taylors Hints are again O.P. & the fourth Edition, with the second of Display will be subscribed next week ³ I wish you could get something from Montgomery—perhaps he may send some of his Literary Friends to us if he does not like to change himself— I hear he is collecting materials for a Life of Cowper ⁴— I don't much admire Johnsons Life just published with the 3^d Vol. of the Poems ⁵— I think some well written Lives of eminent Characters

² Perhaps Arthur Mower, whose tale, *The White Cottage*, Blackwood published in 1817. Mower also published a medical treatise in 1819.

³ Mrs. Ann Taylor Gilbert's *Practical Hints to Young Females* (see II, 406n.), the *New Monthly Magazine*, December 1, 1814 (II, 437), announced, "will appear in a few days." The *Eclectic Review*, January, 1815 (n.s., III, 110), listed it as "recently published." The book was very successful. It was soon "O.P."; the *Eclectic*, July, 1815 (n.s., IV, 91f.), reviewed very favorably the third, while in the same month the *Monthly Review* (LXXVII, 325) praised what it called the sixth, edition. Miss Jane Taylor's *Display. A Tale for Young People* was announced as "recently published" by the *Eclectic*, June, 1815 (n.s., III, 639), which reviewed it cordially in August (n.s., IV, 158-167). Some praise was bestowed, also, by the *British Critic*, July, 1815 (n.s., IV, 107f.), and the *Monthly Review*, March, 1816 (LXXIX, 325). See II, 416n.

⁴ James Montgomery (1771-1854), the poet, published Cowper's poems, with a memoir, in 1824.

⁵ Edited by John Johnson, LL.D., and published by Rivington, 1815 (see the *Eclectic Review*, August, 1815 [n.s., IV, 203]).

who have not already been Biog^d would pay well & do good—but they must be well done—

Freeman ⁶ has written me from Farnham & desires me to send his best regards to you—he says he likes the College very much—it will be a nice post for him now the war is over as I suppose it may almost be considered— Bonaparte you see is taken and I hope his System will now very soon be extirpated—observe how zealously he has laboured for Immortality—enclosed are paper Impressions from some Medals— I have 23 of them in my possession (lent to me) beautifully executed in Bronze to commemorate his great Victories—and now I suppose the same Artists will be employed to execute others to commemorate his defeat, flight, & surrender to the English

I am sorry to be the communicator of the melancholy intelligence of poor John Wrights Death— Wright did not know till Friday (yesterday week) that his Brother was at all dangerously ill but as soon as he was informed of it he wrote immediately & said to quiet his Brothers Mind that if his disorder should terminate fatally he would take care of his Child, but before the letter could reach him his Brother died on Saturday last & the Intelligence reached here on Monday—they were both much affected. I took Kate & Mary down on Tuesday to Greenwich to call on M^r Wright & on M^r White— I found the latter in great Tribulation on Account of poor Sophia who was very ill— M^r Wright does not seem much benefitted by her Country residence— She took a severe Cold soon after she got to Blackheath & did not recover from it sufficiently to give the Country a fair Chance— We have had an awkward Accident in our Family—our new Cook Maid has had the misfortune to break a blood Vessel somewhere in her Chest & she is now con-

⁶ See II, 376n. The reference is to the Army College.

fined to her Bed.— She will recover, Winstone ⁷ says, but will never be fit for hard Work or for London again— M^{rs} Wright has a very excellent Servant coming or come to her whom she has found at Blackheath—it will be a great Comfort to her— Grace has disgraced herself— We are all pretty well here, much in the usual way, and all desire kindest regards to you & all the Bakewell worthies— M^{rs} Bowes has been afflicted with an attack of Apoplexy from which she is slowly recovering but of course it is but slowly— I have heard from Mr Marriott ⁸—he is at Little Hampton on the Sussex Coast— He has now his number of five pupils at 200£ P[er] ann. and he means to limit them to that Number— The Parents wished it & preferred the 200£ to the 100£ system— Farewell

Believe me D^r John

Yours very affect^d

J A Hessey

»» 316 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

31 July 1815

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Retford. A few sentences are printed by Blunden, p. 38.

London July 31. 1815

My dear John

As you talk of leaving Bakewell for Retford on Wednesday I aim at you at the latter place and I begin by wishing that you may enjoy many happy returns of this Day which has not been forgotten by us— We sent to ask M^r & M^{rs} Wright to come & join us in drinking your Health but they could not come—

⁷ See II, 448. Surgeons named John Winstone and Thomas Winstone are listed in Pigot's *Commercial Directory*, 1823–1824.

⁸ See II, 393n.

however we dignified the solemnities of the day by a Plum Pudding and poured the usual Libations after it—this day four weeks will be the Anniversary of my Birth & I hope we may both be allowed frequently to perform the same ceremonies for each other on the return of this Season— I am very glad to hear you say you feel better for your excursion and I hope your better looks & spirits will add strength to your report on your return— You almost make me long to be in Derbyshire with you— I was always pleased with the Country & I should like exceedingly to shew it to Kate & to M^r Wright but I must give up all thoughts of further travelling at present unless it be absolutely necessary for health— My Females are not very stout & the young Gentleman has been very poorly for the last week but he is decidedly better to day & I hope is getting quite well again— M^r Wright is still very poorly & M^r Hunter has been very much so Mr Bonsor is gone to his Wife & Family at Eastbourne they have the same House as last Year— I had a pretty good Subscription for Display—there is a Capital Review of it in the Eclectic & a very bad one in the B Critic¹— The Book will sell well I have no doubt— There is a very good Review of Practical Hints in the Monthly Review²—all the Reviews speak well of that Book— I hope we shall ere long have a longer list of our own valuable Publications— You must have been agreeably surprised to find the party at Buxton—'tis very pleasant to meet with friends where one expects none but Strangers in ones Travels— Woodhouse & I are thinking of going down to Farnham to see Freeman³ one of these days— I found the little Lawyer a few days ago *perdu* in his Chambers with a formidable Black Eye— He had rec^d a Blow from a Cricket Ball & brought

¹ See No. 315, note 3.

² Ann Taylor's *Practical Hints* (1815) was reviewed in the *Monthly*, July, 1815 (LXXVII, 325). On the second edition, "recently published," see the *Eclectic Review*, June, 1815 (n.s., III, 639).

³ See II, 376n.

home marks of its violence which did not leave him for some time— I have no news to tell you in the way of Business—all seems to go on as usual tolerably well as times go— I hope I shall be able by the end of the week to send you the 50£— I have not so much in the House at this time or I would send it in the parcel— Mr Johnson ⁴ I understand by your fathers Letter is to return to Retford with you— We heard from Mary {T}aylor to day—she is pretty well, but thinks she will not be able to visit Retford while you are there as Miss Hunt is very seriously ill & is from home, and she is fearful of the Consequences of her Illness— Mr Bowes ⁵ is getting well apace—all the rest of the Bath folks are very well— My new Apprentice continues to give me all the satisfaction I could wish—he is a very nice Boy

Remember us all very kindly to all your family

& believe me Dr John

Yr affect friend

J A Hessey

»» 317 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

29 August 1818

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Messrs Johnson & Taylor/ Bakewell./ Single.

Postmark: [A]U 29 [1]818. A few sentences are quoted by Blunden, pp. 50f.

Fleet Street Aug. 29. 1818

My dear John

Your Account of the knowing Coachman has amused me very much, and would have gratified Reynolds exceedingly if he had been here to see it—but he is gone off to Devonshire and is

⁴ Taylor's brother-in-law (see II, 407n.).

⁵ See II, 415.

at this moment very probably sitting beside a character of a similar description for he went off last night on the Exeter Coach & will not reach his journey's end till 8 this Evening— He went to Brighton a few nights since on Business and had the happiness to be overturned ¹ just opposite his friend Hunts old Residence in Horsemonger Lane ²—no one was materially hurt — He means to return through Bath & I have given him letters to some of the folks there— Andrews ³ has just been here looking very well, but he is obliged to go to the South again before the winter to avoid our climate— He thinks of going to Italy and we have been talking about his writing a few plain sensible letters in the style of Birkbeck's Notes on the state of France Switzerland & Italy,⁴ not such as your modern Tourists get up out of each others Books, but such observations as a sensible man like himself knowing the Language, travelling leisurely, having nothing to do, and plenty of time on his hands might very well write, and to contain such Information respecting the country he travels through as sensible enquiring men look for in vain in most Books of travels. He has been in France for the last 5 or 6 weeks travelling about for health & amusement— He says there are abundance of Englishmen every where, and that they are every where disliked and very frequently insulted in the most open manner—the very boys shout after them in the streets— Now this is not a very pleasant thing for a man to meet with when he travels for pleasure, and many a man will be deterred from exposing himself to such incidents who yet has a

¹ Keats wrote to Jane Reynolds on September 1, 1818 (*Letters*, p. 214): "I am glad John is not hurt, but gone safe into Devonshire—I shall be in great expectation of his Letter."

² "A mischievous allusion to Leigh Hunt's imprisonment" (Blunden).

³ Perhaps the person mentioned above (see II, 404).

⁴ Morris Birkbeck, *Notes on a Journey through France* (1814; 5th ed., 1815).

very laudable desire to know something of France beyond the mere detail of names of the Towns and catalogues of Cathedrals—we want to know what France is as compared with England, our best standard of course if we have not travelled, that we may know how properly to value our advantages where they preponderate, and that we may take a useful hint from them in those particulars in which they excel us— That those who are discontented and wish to go from home may know what to expect before they decide on emigrating and that the advantages & disadvantages of living in France may be fairly stated— I should think Andrews capable of doing something of this kind and he wishes somewhat to amuse him & occupy him & perhaps repay him part of his expenses— He talks of wishing to take out with him any youth whose father may wish him to travel a little before he begins the world & who would be glad to place him under the care of one who would take charge of his person, mind, & morals—— If you should chance to hear of any such young gentleman you can think of him— Miss Bond does not approve of our proposal—she wishes to have the thing definitively settled in the same way as Rachel ⁵— Do you think we should offer her fifteen Guineas or Ten Guineas?— Mr Buckland has accepted our offer and sent his M.S. complete— He suggests a frontispiece— I dont know how to manage for a subject unless we get De Wint to give us a rising Sun ⁶— Mr Snow has not replied to my Note— I send you annexed Miss Gales &

⁵ Taylor and Hessey published *Rachel: A Tale* in 1817 (3d ed., 1821). Perhaps Hessey's words mean that "the thing" was the contract for *The Authoress. A Tale by the Author of "Rachel"* (1819), and that Miss Bond was the author of both.

⁶ A. C. Buckland's *Letters on the Importance, Duty, and Advantages of Early Rising*. The earliest edition I have seen is the third (Taylor and Hessey, 1823). In the *London Magazine*, April, 1823 (VII, 486), the fifth edition is announced.

Montgomerys⁷ Accounts, and when you are at Sheffield don't forget the knives & forks—they are 1 Doz large—1 Doz Desert—1 Pair Carvers Sabre shaped—2 pair straight— The Dewints and Hilton are gone— Helen⁸ went to Brighton on Tuesday Dewint returned on Wednesday & on Thursday he & M^{rs} D. set off for Lincoln— Hilton went on Saturday— Darling called here yesterday—& so did Percival—both are well— I met Patrick on Sunday on my way from Percy Street—he looks very well, much better than I expected to see him—he enquired very kindly after you—

I should be sorry to attribute any emotions so obviously arising from warmth of heart to weakness, or still more to advancing age, but I rejoice to find that the feelings of youth which are always so amiable have not been erased by contact with a selfish world— Age is generally supposed to deaden the feelings— But age is not in fault—it is the probation we have to undergo in our journey to it that does the mischief— When we are young we fancy every one good and the heart overflows with good will to every one— Affection easily springs up in such a soil— If the affections are well placed they will continue increasing in strength, but if we are frequently disappointed in our objects we become spiritless & careless, and suffer evil dispositions to usurp the place of their betters— You have been many times disappointed but your heart is still warm— I trust it will long remain so, and however you may add to the Number of your friends I hope no one who at present holds that place will cause you to experience the pang which always attends the loss

⁷ Anne and Elizabeth Gales in 1794 began a "bookselling and stationery business" in Sheffield, and "with these ladies, who were joined afterwards by their youngest sister, Sarah, Montgomery continued to reside" until his death in 1854 (John Holland and James Everett, *Memoirs of . . . James Montgomery*, I [1854], 201).

⁸ Presumably De Wint's daughter, who was born in 1811.

of such a possession— Believe me, Your very affect^e Friend
J.A.H.

Bonsor desires his kind remembrances— I dined at his house yesterday— It was Janes Birthday & mine also— 20 years difference between us—a pretty old fellow I am becoming!— All here desire kind regards— Remember me most kindly to your Brother & sisters & to M^r & M^{rs} Johnson— We have had one Rainy Day this week.

The Misses Gale,

To Taylor & Hessey

1816

Aug 30	4	Display ⁹	bds	18	—
	6	Essays in Rhyme ¹⁰ d ^o		1.	7 —
	4	Mat. Solicitude ¹¹ d ^o		15.	4
	4	Pract. Hints ¹² d ^o		15.	4
	4	Taylors Present ¹³ d ^o		10.	8
Dec 4	3	Stud. Journal & 3 Diary ¹⁴		1.	1. —
	2	Naiad ¹⁵		6	—
	4	Junius Identified ¹⁶		1.	16 —

£7. 9. 4

⁹ By Jane Taylor (see II, 413n.).

¹⁰ Jane Taylor's *Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners* (1816).

¹¹ By Ann Taylor (see II, 406n., 413n.).

¹² By Ann Taylor.

¹³ Ann Taylor's *The Present of a Mistress to a Young Servant* (1816; 5th ed., 1823).

¹⁴ Woodhouse used two of these diaries for his transcripts of Keats's poems.

¹⁵ Reynolds' *The Naiad . . . With Other Poems* (1816).

¹⁶ By Taylor himself (1816; 2d ed., 1818).

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HESSEY TO TAYLOR

1818

Mr Montgomery

To Taylor & Hessey

1816

Dec.	4	To Goods .. as p Bill	8..	2..	6
	31	....	do“.....	1..	4.	-

1817

Jan.	13	....	do“.....	3.	5	-
Feb.	18	....	do“.....	1.	19	-

£14: 10. 6

Cr

1817

June	4	By Cash rec ^d from Mr Martin	4.	-
------	---	---	----	---

£14.. 6.. 6

N.B. We have sold only 3 copies of his little pamphlet of Nicholas the Chanceseller

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

7 October 1822

Address: Mr John Taylor.

London Oct. 7. 1822

My dear John

As your Books Papers & Linen make a tolerably large parcel by themselves I will send them to night as I think I shall not be able to get your fathers Order complete so soon. I was very glad to hear of your getting an inside Place for the Day began very inauspiciously & it continued to rain here till about

11 o'Clock after which it became fair. Thomas¹ did not put any other Box Coat than your own upon the Coach—he shall make enquiry about the Umbrella and order the Guard to leave it for you as he goes through Retford. Mr Bonsor called in on Thursday Evening and sat with me for an hour—he had taken a little Cold but it was nearly gone—he is now at Polesden. Just after he had left me to go to Mr Hartshornes² on Thursday a message came from Rice requesting me to go & join a Party there including John Reynolds & his wife—after some little hesitation I smartened myself a little & went, and there I found the whole of them at Cards— Mrs R. was at the Round Table.³ I felt no Inclination to play Vingt un, not knowing how, and the Whist Table was of course full, so I moped about for an hour or two till Supper time, and then we adjourned to a very dull stupid meal, and afterwards parted, all saying what a dull Party we had been— Rice had managed badly, and we did not get well placed at Supper. I had no opportunity of seeing much of M^{rs} R. but she seems a sensible pleasant Woman. She is not pretty, and scarc[e]ly to be called handsome though more of that quality than of the former— She has a very fine eye and eyebrow, & the rest of her face is not unlike her husbands— She is rather tall, & thin, & rather older looking than I expected, but they all said she was not in her best looks that Evening as she had been much fatigued during the Day— When I have seen more of her I will tell you more. I have heard again from Manningford & I believe they are all now pretty well again— I expect to see them

¹ A servant: see II, 411.

² The only occurrence of this name in the *Post Office London Directory*, 1822, is J. W. Hartshorne and Company, merchants, 33 Old Broad Street.

³ Hood attended this party on Thursday, October 3. He writes (Walter Jerrold, *Thomas Hood* [1907], pp. 127-131, dates the letter merely October, 1822) of attending a party in the Reynolds home, where he saw Mrs. J. H. Reynolds, and says, "To-night we all meet at Rice's, and I shall see Mrs. R. for the second time."

next Saturday unless they should not be so well as to make it advisable to them to leave so early. We are all pretty well here. Mr Eagles ⁴ has sent a cleverish Paper, a Defence of Humbug—Perhaps I may send it for you to read in the parcel—De Quincey's Preface was not complete— I have had another Letter from him promising the *end* by *next* post, but it is not come yet ⁵—He is very ill he says—his letter is quite affecting. I have no other News I believe— All here desire their kindest regards. Make mine to all your Circle & Believe me

Your affect^e Friend

J A H

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

5 November 1822

Address: Mr John Taylor/ Mess^r Johnson & Taylor/ Bakewell. *Post-mark:* B NO 5 1822. A few sentences are printed by Blunden, pp. 140f.

Fleet S. Nov. 5, 1822

My dear John

In a hasty letter which I wrote to you yesterday as the Post was going out I omitted to mention what was one chief object of my writing that I am still exceedingly short of Cash, and as this is so dull a time of the year there is but little hope of my being better at present—now as borrowing is with me the order of the Day, perhaps your brother ¹ could spare us, as he did last year, at this time, two or three hundred pounds, draw-

⁴ John Eagles (1783–1855), artist and author, curate of Halberton, Devonshire. Taylor and Hessey published the second edition of his *Journal of Llewellyn Penrose* (1825). Among his other works are *Essays Contributed to Blackwood's Magazine* (1825) and *Felix Farley, Rhymes* (1826). See II, 428.

⁵ See the next letter, note 6.

¹ James Taylor.

ing upon us at two or three months as may suit his needs—it would be a great help to me, and would do me more good than whole boxes of blue pill & gentian. I do abominate this mendicant System, but at all events I can but submit to circumstances and just put the question—if it be not convenient of course I cannot wish for it, and if it be I know it will give your brother pleasure to lend a helping Hand to the poor and needy. I am expecting to see your Cousin in Town tomorrow—M^r Wright has taken a Lodging for her in Howard Street, Strand. M^r Masfen is gone into Staffordshire and has reached home safe and well— We all continue well here and I hope we shall have no more appearances of Fever. Poor Gilchrist ² is in Town again—he is still very ill, but he has seen D^r Baillie ³ to day who gives him great Hopes but says it will require a considerable time to set him up again—Gifford, they say, is very ill indeed—like to die ⁴— I told you De Quincey talks of coming to Town ⁵ again—I had a letter from him yesterday written in so completely altered a Tone that I could scarcely have believed it to be by the same man— He has abundance of Projects, and even begs me to advertise the “Prolegomena to all Future Systems of Political Economy” on the faith of his supplying the Press with Manuscript as fast as it may be required He talks of a Third Part of the Confessions ⁶ again and as for Pandects et hoc genus

² Octavius Graham Gilchrist died at his home, Stamford, Lincolnshire, June 30, 1823. “He was one of the earliest contributors to the *London Magazine*, and an occasional writer in the *Quarterly Review*” (*London Magazine*, August, 1823 [VIII, 232]; the same, October [p. 347], calls him its “earliest Contributor”).

³ Dr. Matthew Baillie, 25 Cavendish Square.

⁴ See I, 46n. Gifford lived until December 31, 1826.

⁵ According to H. A. Eaton, *Thomas De Quincey* (1936), p. 292, De Quincey left Westmorland for London on December 9.

⁶ In the published book he “added an appendix in lieu, as it were, of the unwritten third part which he had promised in the previous December” (the same, p. 287).

omne,⁷ they are to flow as fast as my pen now moves. He says "I Shall be in town for a Certainty on the 5th or 6th by the Mail—" but we are in *some little* dou{bt} about his coming—when we see him we shall be{lieve.}

What do you think of my Clerical Cousin Frank Kelvert marrying a Quaker?—one of the Shining ones, as Lamb⁸ calls them—it is positively asserted that he is to take unto himself Miss De Chievre of whom you have heard frequently— What do you think of Theodore being in Love?— Such things have been said— What do you think—but I have not room for more unaccountables. The Confessions of an Opium Eater are selling very well—they were only delivered last week,⁹ and on Saturday 2 Twentyfives & two or three Sixes were sent for in addition— Elia is going on nicely—it will be a pretty volume.¹⁰ Cunningham is better but he has two Children very ill— I saw in the times to day an Advertisement that seemed likely to suit you— it is of a Lodging in Guildford St.—2 Draw^s Rooms, a bed Room—an Attic, a Kitchen &c—60 Guineas a Year unfurnished— I will look at it to morrow

Give my very kind regards to your Brother and all friends round you, I am joined by all here—& believe me

My dear John Your mo. affect. Friend J.A.Hessey

⁷ Horace, *Satires*, l.ii.2.

⁸ In the last sentence of the essay "A Quaker's Meeting" (April, 1821).

⁹ This apparently contradicts Eaton's assertion (p. 287) that the *Confessions* was first published in August.

¹⁰ It was published in January, 1823.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

15 January 1823

Address: Mr John Taylor.

Fleet S. Jan. 15. 1823

My dear John

I scarcely know how to answer the various particulars in your Letters at this time for the Night is far advanced and I was up the half of last Night & feel sleepy & my head aches. so make allowances for me if I am brief— Both the Letters came safe with the Money & the Payments shall be made as directed— I had already taken steps to obtain Mr Andersons Assistance but he had unwillingly engaged himself out to morrow & cannot attend the Hall ¹— M^r Bonsor ² however will do the needful in your Place and will introduce your friends as you wish— He & his Family are all well & send their kind regards to you all I have made out H.C.H's ³ Acc^t & transferred the Money to your Acc^t—but I really could not find time to make out your father's—but I will try to do it or get it done tomorrow & send it by Post— I may possibly have some communication to make about the House— I have heard nothing to day from Rice & am rather anxious to know what has been done— I sent you a Paper of Reynolds's ⁴ which I wanted your opinion about—let me hear soon what you think. The N^o is going on very well & will be a

¹ That is to say, the Girdlers' Company.

² According to W. Dumville Smythe, *An Historical Account of the Worshipful Company of Girdlers, London* (1905), p. 260, Joseph Bonser (*sic*) was master of the company in 1820. Whether the John Taylor who held the same office in 1825 (p. 260) was the publisher I do not know.

³ See II, 412, 432.

⁴ See II, 435.

very good one. De Quincey has not finished his Article ⁵ yet, but he promises it and a Review also. Dr Fyfe ⁶ has sent his Paper & I think it a very fair one— The Persian ⁷ will also send a new one. I think this first Number improves in Sale—we have sold a great many single Numbers Retail and the work has been so much talked about that I think we may fairly hope it will rise considerably this Winter when we get to our New House.⁸ P.P.P. is not capable of taking the correction of the Press—he is a very interesting man, but from his *own* Account not a sufficiently good Classic & neither a French nor Italian Scholar, so he would not suit in the main points, besides wanting all technical knowledge Mr Bonsor does not think J.B. Hunt's Man a very good connection, inter nos, so it is quite as well that he declines, perhaps— As for myself, the reasons that operated against it before are much stronger now as I should have to learn a new business without a teacher. Mr Eagles ⁹ is in Town— I had about an hours talk with him to day and I shall get him & Percival to dine here next week. I cannot write any more so Farewell

Believe me ever, with kindest regards all around you
from Kate & myself

Your very sincere Friend

J A Hessey

little Hessey is to be called *John* The Hooping Cough goes on mildly—Anne Wright is much better

⁵ *Letters to a Young Man Whose Education Has Been Neglected*, London Magazine, January–March, May, July, 1823 (VII, 84-90, 189-194, 325-335, 556-558 [mispaged], VIII, 87-95).

⁶ Andrew Fyfe (1792–1861), M.D. of Edinburgh, 1814. See II, 439n.

⁷ The "Persian," or "J.W.W." (see II, 434, note 4), half of whose essay on "A Road to Preferment in Persia" is on pp. 389-395, contributed various articles like "A Day of a Persian Jew" and "The King of Persia's Female Guards," February, March, 1823 (VII, 125-132, 256-259).

⁸ At 13 Waterloo Place.

⁹ See II, 424n.

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J. H. REYNOLDS TO J. A. HESSEY

January 1823

Address: Mr Hessey.

Dear Hessey

Certainly tomorrow Morning as soon as you please after 10. I am equally harassed & hardworked just now with yourself. —I shall also send you then a short paper on M^{rs} Siddons—and say whether the foll^r day will do for T. Moore ¹

Ever truly yrs

J H Reynolds

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J. H. REYNOLDS TO J. A. HESSEY

January 1823 ²

Address: Mr Hessey.

Sat^r

D^r Hessey

A friend dropped inopportunately in upon me last night & cut Tom Moore ³ off. I send you *Sarah*.⁴ Of course Monday would

¹ For these articles see the next letter.

² The reference to Oakley (none of the twelve Oakleys listed in Pigot's *Commercial Directory*, 1823–1824, throws any light on the subject) suggests that this letter was written shortly before Hessey's letter of January 21, 22 (No. 324).

³ Moore's *Loves of the Angels* was reviewed in the *London Magazine*, February, 1823 (VII, 212–215).

⁴ "Mrs. Siddons's Abridgement of Paradise Lost," February, 1823 (VII, 216). Both Moore and Mrs. Siddons are included by Reynolds in "The Literary Police Office, Bow-Street, No. VIII" (February, VII, 160).

be too late— If not—I could do the thing well tomorrow— Just say whether or not it would do.

I wrote to Oakley last night to say that you would meet him half way & take £37.10.—at a word—& that considering you were the losers of £8.8.—rent, I thought the offer liberal. He has not answered me. The moment I hear—you shall hear.

Ever yrs

J H Reynolds

Write—do not send *verbally*—as I am no Author in the Bearer's eyes.

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J. H. REYNOLDS TO JOHN TAYLOR

January 1823 (?)¹

Address: Mr Taylor or Mr Hessey/ Fleet Street.

Monday

Dear Taylor

You must excuse my *failing* you once more—but I am off for Devonshire tomorrow And the many many things I am compelled to do—& have been—before leaving is more than you can imagine. Think of me, my Dear Taylor, as a Friend who will not always thus deceive you— I saw Hood this morning as I was

¹ A guess. The letter may have been written after that preceding. Reynolds had long been an unreliable contributor: in October, 1822 (VI, 291), the editor mentions "a welcome paper from the *late* Mr. Edward Herbert—why did he not send it sooner." In September, 1823 (VIII, 235), he says: "Edward Herbert's Letter on a Peculiar Race of Men and Horses is come to hand:—we thought he had been dead." Pope, II, 801f., lists only nine articles by Reynolds in the *London Magazine*, the final three in the issues for February, 1823, February, 1824, and June, 1825; but the letters here printed make important additions to the list.

going to Dr Stodart's part of the world but I cannot explain why I am thus faulty. I only know I have fagged myself to death.

I shall be ashamed ever to meet you.

Ever, however, truly

& kindly yours

J H Reynolds

»» 324 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

21, 22 January 1823

Address: Mr John Taylor.

London Jan 21. 1823
22

My dear John

It is now past Midnight & I have the Signal for Bed, but I will not let the Parcel be sent off without a few lines & it is not very likely that I shall be able to write in the morning. I have taken many Opinions (and among the rest those of some of the Persons named) respecting the putting in of the Names in full in Reynolds' Police Report¹ and the Ayes seem to have it so they will e'en stand so—Reynolds himself is decidedly in favor of it, & so is Proctor & Cunningham— I have employed Rylance to² look over the Sheets—as far as the Modern Languages go he may be useful but he is no Conjuror, and of little use for the English—in fact I can trust nobody but myself and I can find but little time— I have not sent to Davisons,³ as I don't like the

¹ The names of "literary offenders," Wordsworth, Coleridge, Moore, Byron, and others, *were* printed in Reynolds' "The Literary Police Office, Bow-Street" ("Edward Herbert's Letters to the Family of the Powells. No. VIII"), *London Magazine*, February, 1823 (VII, 157-161).

² *Written* to to.

³ Probably Thomas Davison, Lombard Street, Whitefriars, who printed various books for Taylor and Hessey.

Report that has been circulated on the Subject— Procter is very kind, but I don't like to set him upon correcting, nor perhaps would he like it— I don't know where to look for a Waterloo Man—if poor Hood ⁴ had a little more gumption in him he might do, but I fear he will not have life enough

Oakley ⁵ called here this Evening, anxious to get this affair settled but very little disposed to give up his Fifty Pounds—but I think we shall get it after all—they are in a Cul-de-Sac & can't get out. I have spoken to Bonsor and he will be prepared to advance the money I shall want: the Securities can be arranged when you return. The Weather has been tremendously cold here for the last few Days—on Sunday the Thermometer was at 8, at Ten o'Clock in the Morning, and it is still exceedingly cold— We all continue very well & the Children, if they really have the Hooping Cough have it so mildly as to give or feel scarcely any pain. I fear it will be unfavorable weather for you to travel in, but you must wrap up well & keep out the cold as well as you can— Don't attempt outside Travelling. I hope when your Brother returns from Bakewell he will be able to stay at Retford some time to assist your Mother & Sisters with his Advice & Presence, and that you will feel no apprehension at leaving them. All friends here send their kindest regards to you & them with those of

My dear John Your affect Friend

J A Hessey

I sent H C H ⁶ the Acc^t in which you will see Interest is allowed I think to the 24th of Jan^y. the difference is very trifling. I hope he is better. I could not get your Acc^t ready— I will try to-morrow if I can snatch half an hour

⁴ The poet was assistant editor of the magazine.

⁵ See II, 430.

⁶ See II, 412, 427.

» 325 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

14 March 1823

Address: Mr. Taylor. A brief extract is printed by Blunden, p. 142.

Fleet S. Mar 14—1823

My dear John

I will take care of the first Sheet & add Leslie's Corrections such as I think worth adding—he is not infallible & often mistakes the authors' meaning, as I think you have done in that Passage of De Q's— I conceive he means to describe Herder as <struggling> wrestling *like* a Maniac with this soul consuming evil—"as a maniac" for "as a maniac does with his peculiar delusions"— But I will send the sheet over to De Q¹— He was with me again last Night— But he has not rec^d the letters which were to set him free from London, so his departure is quite uncertain— I spoke to him of Landor, of whom he thinks very highly, as one of the most extraordinary men of the Age. He said he should like much to see the M.S.² and I think we may as well avail ourselves of his Judgment on it if you have no objection— I have not rec^d Bowring's corrected proof but Parker has made up a 3^d Sheet as you will see with his Paper & Cunningham's.³—I send you Reynolds's & Mr William-

¹ Hessey did so on March 17. The phrase he quotes here from De Quincey's "Death of a German Great Man," *London Magazine*, April, 1823 (VII, 373-380), is on p. 375. On his "departure" see II, 437n.

² Of the *Imaginary Conversations*: see II, 450n.

³ The third sheet (2E), pages 405-420, contains only Bowring's "Spanish Romances" and Cunningham's unsigned "Kate of Windiewa's," pp. 410-420. Speaking of his work as sub-editor Hood (Walter Jerrold, *Thomas Hood* [1907], p. 95) says: "The more irksome parts of authorship, such as the correction of the press, were to me labours of love. I received a revise from Mr. Baldwin's Mr. Parker, as if it had been a

sons ⁴— Richard ⁵ <make> may take R's for him to look over, and if you like to send Mr Williamsons by Post his address is "Clavering Place, near Newcastle upon Tyne, J W Williamson Esq." As for the Flora, ⁶ I will talk more with you about it when I see you—in looking over the M.S. I cut out a silly Passage about Hampstead Heath which the Author wishes to have restored—you shall see it and we will advise about it— The book looks pleasant & every body likes the plan— I only want somebody who is Botanical as well as literary to look it over merely for his Sanction in such matters— As for adding to the Poetical Illustrations I scarcely think it worth while unless any thing very striking were at hand in your portfolio— You had some passages collected by your Cousin & yourself— If you could find them, and look them over directly it might be easy to put some of them under their proper heads—but there is no end to such additions, and it may be as well to leave it to each purchaser to make his, or her, own additions—it is a nice Book for such a purpose as well as for graphic or botanical Illustrations. Miss K. is mighty anxious to have it published.

De Quincey will write a Paper upon Landor's Poetry,⁷ with extracts of his finest Passages, and a Character of his Genius &c It is one of a long projected Series to be called the *Neglected*

proof of his regard; forgave him all his slips, and really thought that printers' devils were not so black as they are painted." (C. Baldwin, New Bridge Street, printed the *London Magazine*.) Blunden, p. 166, calls him "Mr. Riley-Parker, the printer's devil."

⁴ Reynolds' article was on "Mr. Kemble," pp. 449-460. Williamson was evidently "the Persian": see II, 428, note 7.

⁵ Evidently a servant or an employee.

⁶ *Flora Domestica* by Elizabeth Kent, Leigh Hunt's sister-in-law, was announced as in the press in June, 1823 (*London Magazine*, VII, 711). That journal printed long extracts from it and praised it highly in August (VIII, 144-148). The book is actually an anthology of old and modern verse, in which much attention is given to Keats. See II, 437n.

⁷ His "Notes on Walter Savage Landor" was written late in 1846.

Writers, or some such title. If we publish the Prose such a Paper as this would be very valuable as preparing the way for the Public Notice of the Author—

Don't take any trouble with Bowrings Sheet I only send it for you to see the Arrangement— His proof is just come and when the Sheet has been corrected I will send it to you.—De Quincey likes Bowrings Translations very much— Farewell

Yrs ever J A H

» 326 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

17 March¹ 1823

Address: Mr Taylor.

Dear John

I wish you would run your eye over Reynolds' Paper²—the first Paragraph, as it seems to me, had better be taken out, and as he has marked too many extracts I have crossed out some of them—it would be too long if they were all in— I have desired Parker to make up with Herder Clares Antiquity & Cunningham³—will you return these two last Articles for him by Richard⁴ in the morning. Herder I have sent to D. Q.⁵ to correct

Mr Bowring has brought a pretty little Paper on the Spanish Romances with five or six poetical Specimens trans-

¹ Monday (see the preceding letter) was evidently March 17. As in No. 325, Hessey is discussing the *London Magazine*, April, 1823 (volume VII).

² On "Mr. Kemble," pp. 449-460.

³ Clare's poem, "Antiquity," is on pp. 380-382. For De Quincey on Herder and Cunningham's "Kate of Windiewa's" see II, 433n.

⁴ See II, 434, note 5.

⁵ See II, 433. Bowring's "Spanish Romances" ran to eight instalments (April-August, November, December, 1823, January, 1824) and was then published by Taylor and Hessey in 1824.

lated ⁶ I have sent it to Parker— He said he had not been able to get as far as your House but he hopes to call soon.—Mr Brooks has sent the 2^d sheet of M^r Walker ⁷ corrected you shall see the revise when it comes from Davison.⁸—Mr Eyres Books are come and his letter which accompanied them is sent herewith as it contains somewhat about your Mothers concern. If he calls on you about his Books you had better ask him to look in here and see some patterns of binding— I cannot understand what sort of *very handsome* binding Lewis ⁹ would Do for 10/ or 12/ p vol *very large royal octavo* with numerous plates.

I have sent off Aytons Proof ¹⁰ by Post

Reynolds has not brought me his marked Copy of Table Talk,¹¹ so I send you one of ours to look at—let Richard ¹² go to him with my Note in the morning & get the Volume

Farewell

Yours ever

J A H

Monday night

» 327 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

18 March 1823

Address: Mr Taylor.

My dear John

I expected a Letter from you to send to Lamb— I really

⁶ See II, 452n.

⁷ See II, 438.

⁸ See II, 431n.

⁹ C. Lewis, 35 Duke Street, St. James's.

¹⁰ See II, 452.

¹¹ Coleridge's.

¹² See II, 434, note 5.

don't know how to write to him— Can you send one by Richard¹ & I will forward it to him— I have your Keys in safe Custody—do you fill your Girdle on Thursday?²—Mr Bonsor told me yesterday what had been done and I was glad to hear the matter had advanced so far and that you had rejected all offers of Abatement— I should think D. will not be off—

We are all pretty well—the baby is decidedly getting better— I saw Mr Gray³ yesterday and engaged him to look over Miss K's book,⁴ to correct the Scientific Part of it—to put in the Linnæan Names Classes &c and the Name in the Nat^l Families of Plants which are now more generally studied than the Linnæan—& to add whatever he thinks necessary in the botanical Part of the Book—he is to have Ten Guineas for his Labour—it will certainly improve the Work greatly

If you hear from Dewhurst let me know—& send Lamb⁵ at the same time. Is there any order from Retford— De Q. was here again last night—he does *not* go on Wednesday as perhaps you prophesied but talks of Saturday⁶ &c

Yours ever J A H

Mar. 18th.

I send you Miss Staffords M.S.

¹ See II, 434, note 5.

² Presumably a reference to a Girdlers' Company dinner. See II, 427n.

³ Probably Samuel Frederick Gray (fl. 1780–1836), author (see I, 171n.) of *Natural Arrangement of British Plants* (1821), or his son John Edward Gray (1800–1875), naturalist and assistant zoological keeper (1824) at the British Museum.

⁴ Elizabeth Kent: see II, 434. She was a friend and admirer of Keats, but Haydon in 1818 referred to her as a "horrid creature . . . , looking like a fury & an old maid, mixed" (*Letters*, pp. 27, 76, 120). Taylor and Hessey also published her *Sylvan Sketches*, which mentions Keats, in 1825.

⁵ That is to say, one of the *Elia* essays.

⁶ According to H. A. Eaton's *Thomas De Quincey* (1936), p. 294, he did not get away from London till August (see II, 433n.).

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

21 March 1823

Address: Mr Taylor. A sentence is quoted by Blunden, p. 143.

Fleet S. Mar 21. 1823

My dear John

If you think it right I can make a parcel for Retford, of Mr Brookes' Numbers which his Brother ordered, to send him the third Sheet of Holy M^r Walker—he has not yet returned the Revises of the first two Sheets.¹ Perhaps you would like to write home by the same conveyance—there is not any thing to send to your Mother

I am sorry I cannot agree with you about the Smiths²—the thought is not bad, but it is spun out beyond all bounds the only good thing in it is the Theatrical Adventure which of itself might have made a decent little bit of fun for the Miscellany³ or a light article of a Page or two— I send you the Sheet read by Hood & Leslie with their Corrections— Mr Cary's⁴ is not yet come back here— I have not had time to read Allaverdi⁵— I don't much expect De Quincey will finish

¹ See II, 436.

² Possibly referred to in an undated letter of Hessey's (Blunden, p. 141): "I think we cannot with any Decency or Prudence publish Smith's 'Horns' when we have rejected Lamb's Horns. It is an unpleasing subject and there is nothing in Smith's paper to redeem it from the objection. . . ." Lamb's essay *was* published in the January, 1825, issue of the *London Magazine*, and was demolished by *Blackwood's* in the same month (XVII, 91f.).

³ A regular department of the *London Magazine*.⁴ "A Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante," March, April, 1823 (VII, 317-324, 396-404).⁵ The hero of "A Road to Preferment in Persia," April, 1823 (VII, 389-395).

his fourth Letter ⁶ this month he was with me again for a little while last night—he is better—

Mr Bacon's Articles want your looking over— I can't tell how he came to fancy the Agriculture had been left out—it occupies half a Page in March at the end of *Public Events* ⁷— Return me Bacon's Letter.— The Science ⁸ makes only 3½ pages— Shall he set up the Ice Caves or the Parrots,⁹ or wait? Perhaps Dr F. will send some more Proceedings of Societies ¹⁰

<If you like to detain the Messenger while you> We are all going on pretty well, but my Head aches— I hope yours is better

Yours ever

J A H

» 329 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

21 March 1823 ¹

Address: Mr Taylor.

Friday 21st

My dear John

I send you the Third Sheet corrected by Leslie, for you

⁶ The fourth of the *Letters to a Young Man Whose Education Has Been Neglected* appeared in the May issue (mispaged 556-558).

⁷ VII, 364 (unsigned).

⁸ Blunden (p. 143), quoting this sentence and the next, reads "The Sinner." Hessey refers to the regular department, "Report of the Progress of Science" (April [VII, 466-470]), which (see II, 428n., 440n.) was contributed by Dr. Andrew Fyfe.

⁹ They did appear in the Science department in May (VII, 582-584). The subject of Ice Caves was returned to in November, 1823 (VIII, 555).

¹⁰ Dr. Fyfe's "Proceedings of Societies" appeared in March and May (VII, 340f., 586). See the next letter.

¹ Written immediately after the preceding letter.

to read for Press— I have sent the Proof to Darley ² and invited him to dine to morrow— Was it not *Percival* that wished so much to see Lamb? Send your Richard ³ & ask him to come, & if we can get Reynolds too we shall be quite enough for a pleasant Party. Dr Fyfe has sent some more Scientific ⁴—pray look at it and see if you think it will do. The Slips of 3^d Sheet are sent—and a few odds & ends of M: S: that are come to day—

I hope your Girdling ⁵ has not indisposed you—we are all pretty well

Yours ever

J A Hessey

pray send the 2^d Sheet & the 3^d also as soon as you can

» 330 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

About 25 March ¹ 1823

My dear John

Reynolds has brought the End of Kemble ²— I am going to send to him now for Barry Cornwall ³—and the Drama ⁴ will be here in the morning— De Quincey has sent a little, but I have

² Perhaps a reference to George Darley's *Letters to the Dramatists of the Day*, a series of six articles with a postscript and a letter to Barry Cornwall that began in the July *London Magazine*, or else to the Drama section that he sometimes (see II, 459n.) conducted.

³ See II, 434, note 5.

⁴ See II, 439n. Fyfe's "Report of the Progress of Science" appeared in February–May (VII, 221–224, 335–340, 466–470, 582–587).

⁵ See II, 427n., 437n.

¹ The date is a guess, but the reference to "Lions Head tomorrow" suggests that the letter was written before that here dated March 26.

² *London Magazine*, April, 1823 (VII, 449–460).

³ See II, 442n.

⁴ A regular department in the magazine.

scarcely any hope of getting the whole letter done in time ⁵—Darling has seen him to day but did not call on me—perhaps you have seen him— I suppose it must go without De Q. this month, but if we can say it is really in our hands and not inserted because it came too late it will not be of so much importance

Yours ever

J A H

Kate thinks the Tables too dear—they are much scratched she says

Lions Head ⁶ to morrow send Miscellany ⁷ by Hood

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

26 March ¹ 1823

Wednesday Morn⁸

Dear John

Poor De Quincey was here for a short time last Evening and went away intending to finish his Letter but I have just heard from him that he has been too ill to write a single line—so I shall get him to write a Note for the Lions Head ² stating the cause of the Non Appearance of the *Letter IV.* and as we shall have a capital Number without it I suppose it will not be

⁵ See II, 428n.

⁶ See note 4.

⁷ See note 4.

¹ Wednesday was either March 19 or 26, probably the latter.

² Part III of *Letters to a Young Man Whose Education Has Been Neglected* appeared in the *London Magazine*, March, 1823 (VII, 325-335). Part IV in May (mispaged 556-558). De Quincey did write a note, dated March 27, and printed in "The Lion's Head," April (p. 371), saying that his "inflammatory complaint" was responsible for the delay.

of much consequence. Every thing is now in Parkers Hands except the Lions Head (The Drama I expect directly— Procters Extracts³ came last night.) and I hope we shall now be out in good time. I should like to have a Copy of the Title of Mr Ottley's Book,⁴ and I wish you would send me M^r Cary's Manuscript⁵ that I may lose no time in getting it printed. I will take care that you shall not be interrupted *in that way* to day.—I hope your Head is better and that you won't be hurried or worried (which I dare say are the same in derivation as they are pretty much the same in effect) to day

We are all pretty well here

Yours ever J A H

You are right about Polesden

»» 332 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

27 March¹ 1823

Thursday

My dear John

I believe I have only to ask you to read over Phillips's²

³ Passages from Barry Cornwall's *The Flood of Thessaly*, printed in "The Miscellany" section, April (pp. 460-462).

⁴ *The Italian School of Design* by William Young Ottley (1771-1836) was issued in three parts in 1805, 1813, 1823, and then all in one volume, 1823. The *London Magazine*, April (VII, 485), announces its imminent publication.

⁵ Frances Jane Carey's *Journal of a Tour in France in the Years 1816 and 1817*, was announced by the *London Magazine*, April, July, 1823 (VII, 485; VIII, 109), as "in the press" and August (p. 230) as "lately published."

¹ Thursday was almost certainly March 27: see the preceding letter.

² Charles Phillips (1787?-1859), barrister and miscellaneous writer, was a regular contributor (see *Memorials of Thomas Hood*, I [1860], 8).

Article to see that there is nothing in it that you dislike—and to send something for Lion—and then all will be done. For the latter I expect Hood ³ will be with you very soon— De Quincey will send a little note to put in ⁴— The lines to Allan Cunningham ⁵ may occupy one Page or Clare's Valentine, ⁶ whichever you like best—but I think the *former*. and one or two more Paragraphs— I could not get away last night— De Q. & Woodhouse were both here till *one* oClock this morn^g Yours ev—

JAH

» 333 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

2 April 1823

My dear John

De Quincey seemed to have no notion that he had made any other than a mere conditional promise that he would probably call upon you—and when your Note found me we were on our way to see Figaro at the Opera House ¹—we were much entertained, but dreadfully hot— Your letter to Smith ² went last Night and to day all the Mag^s of *this year* will go—he has had none since May last from us but I am in doubt whether to send them all as he may possibly have obtained them through some

³ That is to say, "The Miscellany," April, pp. 460-463.

⁴ See II, 441n.

⁵ A poem "To Allan Cunningham" (unsigned), April, p. 372. It was composed by William Branwhite Clarke (1798-1878).

⁶ Perhaps "The Birds and St. Valentine," J. L. Cherry's *Life and Remains of John Clare* (1873), pp. 290-295.

¹ *The Marriage of Figaro*, Sir Henry Rowley Bishop's adaptation of Mozart's opera, was first performed at Covent Garden, March 6, 1819, and revived at Drury Lane, March 13, 1823.

² Evidently a provincial bookseller.

other Channel—at all Events when we hear from him again we can forward the others if he has not had them—the cost of sending them is $\frac{3}{4}$ each month for postage they will henceforth be sent regularly You have returned me 3 or 4 papers without any direction how to dispose of them— I have returned Dr Clarks Edinb— and if you will tell me what to do with the others I will ease you of them likewise— Look at Hartly Coleridges Tea Table, will you,— I think it won't do ³—the other little things I have put into Parker's Hands— I want to send Hartlys Mag^a & must write to him with them if you will just tell me what to say. M^{ra} Wright has not been here yet, but if she does not call I will send her the letter by the twopenny post— How are you?²—we are all tolerably Yours ever

J A Hessey

Ap. 2^d 1823

» 334 «

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

1 July 1823

My dear John

We had a very delightful Evening yesterday & I hope you are none the worse for it this morning Hazlitt walked with me as far as to this side of Temple Bar & was very pleasant— He thinks Darley an uncommonly clever Man & likes him much ¹

I send you the Newspaper & some more Landor ²—it

³ Taylor must have rejected it, but he published four sonnets by Hartley in February and "Stanzas" in May, 1823 (VII, 180f., 508).

¹ This remark refutes the statement of C. C. Abbott, *The Life and Letters of George Darley* (1928), p. 37, that "there is no indication that Darley knew Hazlitt."

² His *Imaginary Conversations* was announced as "in the Press" by the *London Magazine*, June, July, November, 1823 (VII, 711; VIII, 109, 565), and February, March, 1824 (IX, 221, 332), and as lately published, April (IX, 445).

should have reached you before the one which I took yesterday— I believe I have no News for you—but that as soon as I have cleaned out all the Magazine Parcels I shall set to work at taking Stock manfully

Yours ever

J A H

1 July

Make my Compts to Mr Cary

»» 335 ««

J. H. REYNOLDS TO JOHN TAYLOR

15 August 1823

Address: John Taylor Esq/ 13 Waterloo Place.

Great Marlbro Street

15 Aug^t 1823

My D^r Taylor

The Bearer of this note is the Gentleman of whom I spoke to you yesterday as the Author of a Work upon Latin Verse. I am quite sure you will give his Book every attention—and that you will advise him for the best in furthering <his> its publication. By so doing you will add one other obligation to the many I already am indebted to you for

I am D^r Taylor

Most truly yours

J H Reynolds

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

3 September 1823

Address: Mr Taylor.

My dear John

Here is De Quincey's Paper on the Rosicrucians & Free-Masons¹— So far it looks very interesting and if extend very far had better be made into a Book I should think—or perhaps it might take in that form after it has been in the Magazine. I have given his Paper on Malthus² to Parker to be printed & I am going to send off his Proofs to day to Westmoreland to be corrected by him— I shall send Thomas³ up to Aytons⁴ by & by, and he shall call & let you know the Answer he gets about him— The Weather is really going to be fine I think— Send me the English Opera Ticket by Thomas if you have it at liberty— I want to see *Frankenstein*⁵ Yours ever

J A Hessey

Sep 3^d

Should I tell J. B. what J. D's Speculation is about the twopenny Books when I ask him about the Paper?— *He* must not know I presume that we have any concern in it, and yet he won't give J. D. credit I doubt— Perhaps J. D. had better buy

¹ See the *London Magazine*, January–March, 1824 (IX, 5-13, 140-151, 256-261).

² See the same, October, 1823 (VIII, 349-353).

³ A servant: see II, 411n.

⁴ See II, 452n. He was the "R.A." of the magazine, as in September, October, and December, 1823 (VIII, 237-247, 347, 574).

⁵ "A melo-drama, entitled *Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein*: founded on the romance . . . by Mrs. Shelley," and composed by R. B. Peake, was produced at the English Opera House in the Strand on July 26, 1823, and "well received" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, August [XCIII, 174]). It was reviewed in the *London Magazine*, September (VIII, 322f.).

the Paper himself for this first Speculation without our appearing at all even with B.

»» 337 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

23 September 1823

Address: Mr Taylor.

Fleet St. Sep 23^d 1823

My dear John

I have not any objection to your doing what you please in respect to the Security— If I were in your Place I should write to Miss Taylor, who is the most nearly interested in Mr A: and who knows more of his character & Connections than you can do, and say to her that if she will engage to Keep you harmless you will give the Security required— She can I doubt not very well afford to do so, and if she decline it, upon what plea can you be expected to do it?—Mr A. has no claim of relationship upon you, nor any of intimate friendship or Connections except the mere circumstance of his being related to your Cousin— At all events I should make that Experiment first— when you receive her Answer, if it should be unfavourable, you can then decide for yourself and on your own account alone. The Hardship of the Case is not at all chargeable upon you— As long as he has near relations he has the strongest claim upon them— If they refuse, it remains a mere matter of Option with you, and a pure favour, if you choose to do it— The matter however rests entirely with yourself—but I should pursue the Course I have suggested were I you

I meant to have seen you yesterday between Dinner & Tea time, but Darling did not come till it was too late for that, and it was so cold & wet that I feared to venture out— To day I am prevented by Fleetwood's ¹ being in bed— He appears to

¹ Taylor's amanuensis (Blunden, p. 68).

have taken a violent cold—he went to bed with <violent> severe head ache and shivering & fever, and I found him so ill that I thought it right to send immediately to Winston ² for some Medicine for him— He is better, but I have ordered him to stay in bed at present to keep up the warmth & moisture on his Skin— Thank God I feel quite well— My family party all came home yesterday Ev^r quite safe and sound & all appear heartily glad to get to their old quarters again— Kate is getting better I hope decidedly

I have rec^d a large packet of matter from De Quincey & a long letter which I will not trouble you with at present— He has corrected the two Articles, Malthus ³ & Macbeth ⁴— If you will send the remainder of the Sheet it can go to press directly. I send you Schiller ⁵—it would perhaps be worth while to make Walton ⁶ read the Copy to you tho' I shd. think it scarcely necessary.—it makes 191¼ only— You shall have Elia ⁷ very early— There won't be room for Darleys Letter to the Dramatists this month ⁸— If you have his Drama ⁹ send it by George— I am glad to hear from Darling that you are better

Yrs ever

J A H

² See II, 415n.

³ See the *London Magazine*, October, 1823 (VIII, 349-353).

⁴ "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth," the same, pp. 353-356.

⁵ "Schiller's Life and Writings," the same, pp. 381-400, and January, 1824 (IX, 37-59).

⁶ Later Taylor's partner.

⁷ Lamb's "Letter of Elia to Robert Southey," *London Magazine*, October, pp. 400-407.

⁸ Room was made for "John Lacy's" "A Fourth Letter to the Dramatists of the Day," the same, pp. 407-412.

⁹ That is to say, the regular department so headed. C. C. Abbott, *The Life and Letters of George Darley* (1928), p. 46, remarks of Darley and the *London Magazine*, "It is possible that he wrote some of the dramatic chronicles, which are not often of much account." Hessey's comments show that he certainly wrote some. See also II, 440, 459.

3 ^d Sheet	Schiller	16
4	do	<u>31$\frac{1}{4}$</u>
	F. Poets.	3 ¹⁰
	Procter	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
	Elia	7
	Bloomfield	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
5 th	Ruth	
	Cunningham	
	Sonnet Moon	
6 & 7—Music, &c &c ¹¹		

will you send to Procter his Proof—and write a few lines to
head Bloomfield ¹²—

»» 338 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

20 October 1823

Part printed by Blunden, pp. 145f.

Fleet St Oct. 20. 1823

My dear John

You need entertain no fears about the Magazine—it is

¹⁰ After 3 "1/4" is scratched out.

¹¹ The sheets in the October issue were not arranged according to Hesse's plan. The third sheet, pp. 381-396, contains only the "Schiller." The fourth has Schiller, pp. 397-400; "Letter of Elia," pp. 400-407; "John Lacy's" "Fourth Letter," pp. 407-412. The fifth sheet has "Scripture Poetry.—Ruth" (signed "D"), pp. 413-417; "Lord Roland Cheyne" (signed "Nalla," or Allan Cunningham), pp. 418-428; "A Sonnet of the Moon" (by the Jacobean poet Charles Best), p. 428. The sixth sheet has "The Fate of Hylas" (signed "C"), pp. 429f.; "Report of Music" and "The Drama," pp. 430-435; "François Villon. Early French Poets" (by Cary), pp. 436-438.

¹² On p. 347 Taylor's "few lines" introduce Bernard Barton's "Verses" (pp. 347f.) on the death of Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823), author of *The Farmer's Boy* (1800).

going on "excellent well"—The New South Wales Paper ¹ I have placed first—it is a useful matter-of-fact Article with a good deal of Feeling and Poetry intermixed—I mean Poetry in the abstract—not Verses.—I have three Papers from Lamb ²—Hazlitt has done me a great Service by sending a Letter which will fill up the Lions Head capitally—he writes to the Editor to claim the credit of having ten or more years ago made the very same replies to Malthus as De Quincey has in his *Notes* last month. He speaks very respectfully of De Q. but says, as he has been a good deal abused for his differing from Malthus, he may as well claim the credit of priority in publishing his Opinions—they exactly coincide with the Opium Eater's.—He says Blenheim ³ will be here in a day or two.—Reynolds is returned to Town, but I have not seen him yet—he told Hood he should send something.⁴—M^{rs} Shelley's Story won't do, according to my Judgment—Your Scotch friend has sent the Phrenological Article. I have ordered it to be set up, and I shall send it to you by Post ⁵—I could laugh with you at Landors Dialogue of Louis & his Confessor ⁶—there are two or three uncommonly good things in it & the whole is admirably done—but there's a lurking devil in all he does—Living so long among Roman Cath-

¹ "Journal of an Excursion Across the Blue Mountains of New South Wales" (signed "B.F."), *London Magazine*, November, 1823 (VIII, 461-475). The author was Barron Field.

² Perhaps "Guy Faux" and "Nugae Criticae," which appeared in November, and "Amicus Redivivus," published in December.

³ Hazlitt's letter (pp. 459f.) is reprinted in P. P. Howe's *Life of William Hazlitt* (1922), pp. 363f., where it is called "a model of its kind." Howe, p. 364, also discusses De Quincey's reply, and prints (p. 359) a letter of July 19, 1823, in which Hazlitt promised Hood, "I will do Blenheim for next month." The article, one of a series, "Pictures at Oxford and Blenheim," appeared in November (VIII, 509-513).

⁴ See No. 341.

⁵ "Phrenology" (unsigned), November (VIII, 541-544).

⁶ "Louis XIV and Father La Chaise," in the second volume of *Imaginary Conversations* (1824).

olics he has contracted a distaste or a contempt for Religion in general. I have sent G. & H. to Southey⁷ & will send I. & K. to him to morrow— I have requested him to address you if he sees any alteration to suggest. If he wishes it to pass, why, let it.—

Robert is certainly getting better—his yellow is <getting> waxing paler, and his Spirits have been better since he came, and Darling gives good hopes of him— They are all very comfortable in Waterloo Place, and are in no want of any thing that is good. Lucy expects to be confined early in November, at which time she will remove to Fleet St to be under the care of her married Sister— We shall easily be able to make arrangements for her Accommodation &c, as Robert will we hope by that time be nearly well he will the more easily bear her absence especially as Mary will stay with him to Keep him Company. John Kelvert⁸ returns at the End of this week, so that there will be no very immediate urgency for the new bed, which shall however be got directly— Robert & his Party feel & express continually the greatest obligation for the very comfortable asylum they have found & only are concerned at the thought of giving so much trouble. Kate⁹ has had no Communication from Miss Taylor respecting the procuring of a Lodging for her—but as her Visit will not take place till November, when your extra Bed will be up she can if you please, & if agreeable to her, take up her residence at your House, or here if Lucy should continue up so long. Mr Hunt¹⁰ was not so well yesterday— I have not heard to day.— I am truly sorry to hear Sarah¹¹ is so unwell— I hope her Illness is not very serious—the good Accounts of your

⁷ The only reference in these letters to the poet-laureate, who (see John Forster's *Walter Savage Landor* [Boston, 1869], pp. 327-330) read Landor's proofs.

⁸ See II, 426.

⁹ Mrs. Hessey.

¹⁰ Perhaps John or Henry, the printers.

¹¹ Taylor's sister.

Mother are very gratifying—pray give our united best Love to them all— I send you three sheets of Conder's Poems—the Sacred Poems, as they are called, will I think please your Mother & sisters— I shall have two or three more to send you next week.¹² Bowrings Book¹³ is going on— Here is also a second Sheet of Mr Coleridges Book.¹⁴ Westall called on me to day to say that he had looked over all poor Aytons Papers & could find nothing that he thought would add to his fame—nothing indeed of any consequence He supposes Ayton must have made a general burning of his Papers before he left the Sea side. I think we must print the Volume in foolscap with Westall's frontispiece¹⁵— It will be more likely to sell in that shape than in the

¹² *The Star in the East, with Other Poems*, by Josiah Conder, D. D. (1789–1855), owner and editor of the *Eclectic Review*, was announced as in the press by the *London Magazine*, October, November, December, 1823 (VIII, 454, 565, 674), and as lately published, January, 1824 (IX, 111). Two of its poems were printed in that magazine in December, 1823 (VIII, 604f.). Earlier Conder, his wife, and Jane Taylor had collaborated in a volume of poems called *The Associate Minstrels* (1810, 1813).

¹³ *Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain* (1824).

¹⁴ *Aids to Reflection* (1825), announced by the *London Magazine*, November, 1823 (VIII, 565), as in the press. See II, 453n.

¹⁵ Richard Ayton (1786–1823), dramatist and miscellaneous writer, moved in the spring of 1821 to the coast of Sussex. In July, 1823, a serious illness drove him back to London, where he was attended "unremittingly and gratuitously" by Dr. Darling, only to die in a few weeks ("Memoirs," pp. x f. See also II, 436, 446n.). His *Essays and Sketches* with a frontispiece and memoir by Richard Westall (1765–1836), R.A., historical painter and book-illustrator, was announced as in the press in December, 1823 (*London Magazine*, VIII, 674). A similar announcement of January (IX, 109) does not mention Westall, but one of March (IX, 333) says the book will have a portrait by Frederick Christian Lewis (1779–1856), engraver and landscape painter, and a drawing by Westall. As published by Taylor and Hessey in 1825 it was edited by George Darley (C. C. Abbott, *The Life and Letters of George Darley* [1928], pp. 48f.) and has no portrait or drawing. The "Memoir" of Ayton (p. xi) says, "Not a leaf of manuscript was found at his lodgings after his death."

size of *Elia*. It will range with Coleridge ¹⁶ &c. What think you? M^r Wright will come direct from Edinburgh & will be too late to call on De Quincey. I saw Talfourd ¹⁷ to day—he will do the Introduction to Tysons Book ¹⁸ immediately—he thinks it much better to publish what is done first, and to be guided by the reception it meets with in the decision as to printing the remainder. He is right—at least it is the safest plan. I have nearly filled my little Sheet with little Gossip, so good night— I sent you a barrel of Oysters—did they reach you— Disperse my kind remembrances among my friends around you & believe me ever,
My dear John, Your aff. F^d J A H

»» 339 ««

BENJAMIN BAILEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

2 April 1824

Address: Mr Taylor, Bookseller, / 13 Waterloo Place / Pall Mall / London. *Postmarks (partly illegible):* C 3 Ap 3 18[24]; BURTON ON TRENT. A brief extract is printed by Blunden, pp. 98f.

Burton on Trent. <March> April 2.
1824.

My dear Sir—

Not having received any parcel from you I take it for granted that Mr Coleridge's books are not out.¹ When they are,

¹⁶ Lamb's *Elia* is announced in the *London Magazine*, January, 1823 (VII, 118), as lately published. Both it and Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* are listed among "Books Just Published" in a list appended to Ayton's *Essays*.

¹⁷ Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795–1854), judge, and the first biographer of Lamb.

¹⁸ James Tyson, a young friend of Taylor and Hessey, died in 1820. His *Elements of the History of Civil Government* was not published (Blunden, pp. 76, 246).

¹ See II, 45an.

I wish, as before, to have them. And I perceive that you are publishing another translation of Mr Carey's—the Birds of Aristophanes.² He is so excellent a translator that I wish you to add his volume to my parcel, which, if a large one, you may send by coach, but if not more than a small volume or two, by the conveyance I formerly mentioned.

I suppose that you will have seen my pamphlet; and I doubt not but that you have done what you could to distribute it among your friends. Unprofitable I know all pamphlets to be, unless, like my brother in law, Gleig, you are involved in a sea of controversy, a battle from which, if necessary, I would not shrink, <from> but from which I would otherwise escape, if possible. My friends generally approve it—and, among the rest, my father in Law, Bishop Gleig, in himself a host. So far, it has answered; and, I believe, it will do me no dishonor.

I am just recovering from a severe but short bilious intermittent[?], having been seized in Church the Sunday before last, and nearly fainted away. My indisposition is attributed to my sedentary habits, and rather severe application. During the last few days therefore, I have read nothing but light books, and, among others, the friend of all, *Robinson Crusoe*. I mention this, because it has been the subject of a Poem, which has amused me in my sickness, of between 300 and 400 lines.³ It has occurred to me that I might make up a Volume of Poems, which perhaps might sell, as, I fear, I shall not have leisure to write the other book. Indeed it would be very convenient to me if I could raise a small sum of money by my pen: and if you thought such a volume very likely to answer [?] in your hands, I would prepare it. But I do not wish you to pledge yourselves any way, as I well know that writing, like all other things, depends on

² See II, 456n.

³ See No. 342.

fashion to suit the public taste. Of course I should publish anonymously. at least let me have your early sentiments on the subject.

I have had a sick house ever since I have lived here. My wife lay in of a still-born child in December, and was afterwards seized with what is termed *Rheumatic gout*, with which she has been confined ever since, and has been a dreadful sufferer.

I have one child alive, a little Girl <ab> not quite two years old, and a very pretty and engaging little creature. Farewell, My dear Sir, Yours truly,

B Bailey.

»» 340 ««

BENJAMIN BAILEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

9 June 1824

Address: Mr Taylor, Bookseller,/ 13 Waterloo Place/ Pall Mall/ London.
Postmarks (part illegible): C 10 JU 10 1824; BURTON ON TRENT 24.

Burton on Trent. June 9.
1824.

My dear Sir—

I have been waiting in expectation of receiving a letter from you by every succeeding post for some time past, and have therefore been the more unwilling to write lest our letters should pass on the road.

Have you received the MS. of my poem or poems? And will you publish it or them? Your silence rather seems to infer your unwillingness: but I hope not. Let me, however, hear your honest opinion.¹

¹ See Nos. 339 and 342.

I am so laboriously engaged just now, and have been for some time past, by parochial duties—having had to write *five* sermons for this week when they are preached—that I have little time or taste for study, or letter-writing. I now write late at night.

I have serious thoughts of bringing my wife to London for advice, & if I could get some Employment to justify my giving up this curacy, to remove thither or to its neighbourhood, which were preferable, myself and family. Should you hear or know of any clergyman who wants some assistance, do let me know.

I am much pleased with Mr Cary's translation of "the birds of Aristophanes."² I am not acquainted with his original: but the translation is spirited, and, I doubt not, faithful; for such is his character as a translator. I wish you would send me Symmons's "Agamemnon" by Æschylus,³ a noble play; but send it in the way I proposed, if you can, through the booksellers here. If you cannot, wait until Coleridge's book comes out,⁴ and send them together. Small parcels are very expensive by coach.

What a hubbub about Lord Byron's Life! We shall have it out yet, from Paris, or Philadelphia, or in some *piratical* form, a very appropriate form for the author [of] the Corsair, Lara &c.—⁵

Let me hear from you soon; and if you can do it without probable loss, I wish you would print at least the Tale as an

² Published by Taylor and Hessey, 1824.

³ Published by Taylor and Hessey, 1824.

⁴ See II, 452n.

⁵ The press, as in the *New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1824 (XII, 280), widely commented on how "for some mysterious reasons" Moore had burned Byron's *Memoirs*. Moore's explanation (as in the same, July, pp. 303f.) was just as widely discussed.

Experiment. If it succeeded, I could and would write others and better ones.

Good night, and God bless you.

(In great haste)

Yours very truly,

B Bailey.

Tuesday night.⁶

11 oClock

Does not Mr Cary live near this? ⁷

»» 341 ««

JOHN TAYLOR TO J. H. REYNOLDS ¹

11 June 1824

Waterloo Place

11 June 1824

My dear Reynolds,

I am sorry to have been so long in replying to your Letter,—but owing to my absence from Town on Tuesday, & H's Engagement at the Hanover Rooms Concert on Wednesday ² I could not meet with <Hessey> him before last Night to have the requisite consultation with him—

⁶ A mistake for Wednesday, June 9, or else he predated the letter.

⁷ Burton-on-Trent is in Staffordshire, not far from the vicarage of Abbot's Bromley where Cary lived from 1796 to 1800. He moved to Kingsbury, Staffordshire, in 1800, and retained both these benefices when he went to London in 1807.

¹ A draft of the letter actually sent.

² *Leigh's New Picture of London*, for 1824–1825, p. 432, describes the New Rooms, Hanover Square, as "a handsome suite of apartments, fitted up in the most splendid style, and let out for the performance of concerts, &c." I have found no notice of a concert there on Wednesday, June 9.

Our first <consideration> Thought is, <how> how <we may be able> to comply <most closely> with your Request, and 2^{ndly} (as XYZ³ would say) <how> how to do it with least Inconvenience or Injury to ourselves.—We shall be glad to <assist> be of Service to you but we must take Care not to plunge ourselves into Difficulties—(Plunge, is the usual Metaphor I believe on these occasions)—Now a Bill at 6 months *will* fall due at the End of that Time, and will not be put off for 3 Months longer on any Plea that we should like to urge;—yet 6 Months hence brings us to a Time when we are <almost always> sure to be more scant of Cash than is comfortable. What say you to 9 Months? If you can get the 12 mo's Bill discounted—you can in all Likelihood obtain the needful for one at 9 <Months> & as this Period will agree better with our Plans <I had> rather if you <please>, have no objection, that the first 100£ were made payable then.

For the 2nd 100£—you <may> can draw, if <you please> <necessary> you please, at 12 Months, but we should wish that this Bill might be taken up by you, as you propose.—Our concerns are now a good deal extended—we have much Money locked up in Speculations which either do not answer, <yet>, or are not calculated to bring any Return for a considerable Time—and it would be inconvenient to us to suffer more of that very necessary seed, <Gold>, the Mopusses [?] to be without fructifying

Now, as every money Bill in the Commons is considered proper to be accompanied with a Petition for the Redress of Grievances—<& as all Grants of Money are accompanied with a Statement of the Ways & Means>, let me ask your Patience while I say one or two words on this Subject.—

<1st> If you continue the Drama, we must press earnestly upon your Mind the necessity of our having it by the

³ De Quincey's regular *London Magazine* signature.

25th of each Month— If this cannot be done without carrying the Notices beyond the 20th let them stop there I had rather they ceased with the 18th or the 15th than that we should be agitated & <distressed> hurried at the End of the Month with the complaints <of the> Printers, & the <apprehension> Fear of being too late. I might mention the increased Expense which I do assure you is beyond all proportion more than you would imagine, but I have no Need I am sure to <press you with> add further arguments.—

But perhaps you <intend to> had rather discontinue the Drama, & this was your own Desire I think about a Fortnight ago when you told me you had not <Time> Leisure to attend to it— You shall do whatever you chuse <about it>. <I> We shall be very glad if you continue it,—or <I> we will give it to Darley if you had <rather be> prefer being free from it.—Let <me> us only know your <Intention> wishes & that as soon as possible that he may prepare for it if necessary—⁴

For the rest <I> we shall rely on your kindness in supplying us with articles, to suit your own Taste, to the am^t of the 100£ within the <Term> 9 Months—<it will require> that

⁴ Important comments for the biography of Reynolds, who has been supposed (see II, 430n.) to have written only three articles for the *London Magazine* in 1823, 1824, and 1825. Darley wrote the "Drama" for October, 1823 (see II, 448n.). He remarks (VIII, 432): "In the temporary rustication of our brother Contributor who generally 'does the drama,' we were invested, much against our will, with this ungrateful office." In November (VIII, 549) "the humdrum gentleman of last month" again wrote the "Drama." Apparently thereafter Reynolds was responsible for it, but Taylor's complaints in this letter were abundantly justified. Thus the dramatic section for May, 1824 (IX, 567), runs to one page instead of the usual three or four pages. In June (IX, 671) it is less than a page in length, in July (X, 89-91) it is back to two and one-half pages and in August (X, 197-201) to four. Evidently Reynolds had made some efforts to meet Taylor's ultimatum, but I suspect that the August "Drama" was his last, as the style of that in September, presumably by Darley, is very different.

is about 12 printed pp. <a> every Month.—And If you sho^d at last find it possible to exceed this Quantity so as to provide for any part of the 2nd 100£ before it <is> becomes due <I> we shall be well pleased <as it will leave a less Sum to be provided by you at the End of the Twelvemonth to> set it off, <which> I only fear that this is not possible consistently with the Duties of yr Profession

Believe me, Ever, My dear Reynolds

Your sincere & affectionate Friend

John Taylor

»» 342 ««

BENJAMIN BAILEY TO JOHN TAYLOR ¹

14 June 1824

Address: Mr Taylor, Bookseller, / 13 Waterloo Place / Pall Mall / London.

Postmarks (part illegible): C 16 JU 16 182[4]; BURTON ON TRENT

24. An extract is quoted by Blunden, pp. 99f.

Burton on Trent. June 14. 1824.

My dear Sir—

Your letter is not very complimentary to my poetical talents or productions; but it is that which I value much more than idle compliment & self-love—it is candid and honest. In truth, although I did not and *do* not think so very meanly of my fancy and imagination, yet I have never thought poetry my talent, if I have any talent at all. Nor have I ever mistaken facility of composition for excellence; and the hurried manner in which the tale ² was written, the production of a very few days, would hardly intitle it to notice, though it came from a better hand. You have not been always so fastidious in publishing verses— I will not say poetry, for I agree entirely with you in

¹ Endorsed by Taylor, "Send to Baldwins a MS. & the Agamemnon directed to The Rev^d B. B. Care of Messrs Scott & Com."

² See Nos. 339 and 340.

the rareness of this spiritual essence—: but I freely confess that I think you are very right, and fervently wish that all publishers used the same determination. Had I known your rigid rule, I would not have troubled you with any stuff of mine; and as it is, I shall seek no further to publish writings of this nature, nor shall prosecute further schemes of the same <nature> kind, which indeed are but waste of time with me, who have much more important studies to prosecute, and higher duties to perform.

I quite agree with you in the rareness of poetical productions, I should say, rather than of poetry, which exists in every man's bosom: "it is the *stuff* that we are made of" ³—the elements, out of which great poets bring to light their productions. In our language, Shakspeare and Milton are the only poets, in *whom as poets*, I can see no fault. The last is my favourite, because he is more allied to my turn of thinking, not because I think him the greatest poet. Shakspeare is the Prince of Poets. For the same reason I prefer Dante to Ariosto and Tasso. But Ariosto was more the poet of nature, and Tasso as much perhaps as Dante. I prefer Wordsworth to Byron, because Wordsworth is more contemplative, and indeed in his higher flights more poetical. But both poets have very *great* faults; and upon your present principle you could hardly be or have been the publisher of either.—But enough of this. I am quite sure that I have no claim to rank among any of them, great or small. Be so good, therefore, when you send me Symmons's *agememnon* ⁴ and Coleridge's publication,⁵ to send me with it my unfortunate M.S. If I ever offer you another, it shall be in Prose; but you almost deter me from that.

The air of Burton certainly disagrees with my poor wife, and the duty with me; for I am now suffering with an attack of

³ Compare *The Tempest*, IV.i.156f.

⁴ See II, 456n.

⁵ See II, 453n.

bile in consequence of last weeks duty which rendered me unable to officiate yesterday. I have not positively resolved on coming to town: but should you hear of any duty, particularly in some of the Chapels, I shall be much obliged to you if you will inform me.

The town seems quite to have changed since I knew it, when nothing but poetry would go down. Lord Byron wrote himself clean, and by publishing the result published many things unworthy of his *genius*. His immoralities were scandalous.

I am, My dear Sir,

Yours very truly

B Bailey

P.S. I think it is through Baldwin's house ⁶ that you might send me a small parcel to the Booksellers here, Scott & Co. You might inquire when in the Row, and if so, send me agememnon & the MS. soon. Have you read my pamphlet yet? {I} should like your opinion.

»» 343 ««

J. H. REYNOLDS TO J. A. HESSEY

June 1824 (?) ⁷

Address: Mr Hessey/ 93 Fleet Street/ JHR.

Sat^r Night

Dear Hessey

This will be delivered to you early on Sunday Morning.

⁶ Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 47 Paternoster Row.

⁷ A guess. The letter may be a sort of reply to Taylor's of June 11, 1824. On the other hand, it may have been written, say, on Saturday, March 22, 1823, when the "Drama" herein promised was still expected by Hessey in No. 330.

This Evening I should have sent but owing to my cursed habit of procrastinating the Drama, I have delayed it until every hour is precious. Tomorrow Morning, the moment it is done I shall send it—& I shall be at the desk between 7 & 8. I have been this Evening at a Client's Accounts (the *worst* subject for me) from 8 until after 10— And I am hurt beyond measure at the inconvenience I put you to. I shall write on tomorrow but say what you want—will 4 pages be too much—or will 3 of the Drama & something short do— Tomorrow is heartily at your Service—& mind that the profit of the paper goes to the extra charge of the printer. This I quite insist upon.

Yours ever truly

J H Reynolds

My Serv^t shall come away the moment I finish.

»» 344 ««

J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

30 June 1826

Address: Mr Taylor/ Waterloo Place.

Fleet S. June 30/26

Dear John

Simmons has discovered among his Papers the Manuscript to which Mr Coleridge alludes. It appears to have passed thro' my hands certainly, but it was as a Portion of the "Aids to Reflection" which was left out of that work on Account of its length.¹ It has been lying ever since in Simmons' Desk and I am

¹ On the omitted portions see Coleridge's letters (*Unpublished Letters*, ed. E. L. Griggs, II [1933], 342f., 350-352) to Hessey. According to Sir E. K. Chambers, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1938), pp. 310f., final proofs reached the author in March, 1825, and publication followed in May.

very happy it is found. I return Mr Coleridges Letter with it. When you write to him pray make my kind regards & tell him I am very sorry for the anxiety which I have unwittingly caused him

Yours ever

J A H

The little foolscap Volume which I am printing for Wilson's Friend will be delivered in boards to the Subscribers— If you have a List of your Books I could certainly circulate nearly 500 Copies for you, and as the Book is adapted for Young People a List of M^{rs} Taylors² & the other wor{ks} of that description might with great Propriety and most probably with advantage be inserted— I am printing a List of Sharpes Books³ in which I have a Share for the same purpose. The Title sheet goes to press immediately so that no time should be lost

»» 345 ««

ISABELLA JANE CLARKE TOWERS TO LEIGH HUNT¹

1 November 1829

Address: To/ Mr Leigh Hunt.

Standerwick Nov^r 1st 1829

My dear Sir,

If I could have foreseen the disastrous effects, which my barbarous missile would produce,—(on my malignant and *self-*

² See II, 406n. Taylor and Hessey had dissolved their partnership on June 30, 1825.

³ Possibly William Sharpe, bookseller, 13 King Street, Covent Garden.

¹ Perhaps the chief value of this gay letter from C. C. Clarke's sister, author of *The Children's Fireside* (1828), is that the handwriting proves her to be the transcriber of the two poems (the first is headed, "On/ Chaucer's 'Floure and the Leaf.'/ written in my brother's Chaucer/ by

ish self, I mean,)—be assured you should never have had to date from your aerial dwelling:—a weapon projected from a height of “nine miles,” and to commit such havoc!—incredible!—all gilded and beautiful as it is too, inside and out!—insidious and wicked!—I could not have believed you capable of so much malignancy Mr Hunt!—

Here have I received a letter, that is so beautiful,—so complimentary,—so peculiarly imbued, with the graceful ease, for which your writings are celebrated,—that I being FORTUNATELY UNKNOWN to you, may with safety be proud of;—yet does this letter bear a cruel poison in its heart,—to which the prussic acid in the kernel of the nectarine, is but as the bland crème de noyau!—Who that shall read and admire your elegant letter, in the countless ages, through which my book is destined to exist, as an heir loom in my illustrious (obscure) family;—but will see, and at the same time sneer at the gunpowder-plot-disposition, of their great great grandmother Isabella Jane Towers—the fierce moral lesson reader, to dilatory students;—the humane battering wether of their strong holds;—the brisk disperser of gentlemen’s goods, chattels, “(inkstands”) self love, and brains;—the “helmeted” virago, who “blew up” authors “nine miles high,”—and received in return a barbed arrow, that wounded, and rankled, and soothed, and fascinated, as com-

the lamented young Poet.”) added at the end of the manuscript *Poems by John Keats . . . written by J. C. Stephens for I J Towers. 1828*, on which see II, 206n. A laudatory notice of her book of nursery tales was reprinted from the *Scotsman* in the *Supplement to the Examiner*, March 2, 1828, but I have found no mention of it by Hunt or Lamb or Hazlitt. Incidentally, Mrs. Towers’ poem, “To Gathered Roses. (In Imitation of Herrick.),” was printed in *Leigh Hunt’s London Journal*, September 10, 1834, p. 191. In the October 29 issue (p. 248) Hunt notes that she did not intend it to be signed and that he himself affixed her full name to it. Hunt also published her “Stanzas to a Fly That Had Survived the Winter of 1822,” signed “I. J. T.—Standerwick,” in his *Literary Examiner*, December 13, 1823, pp. 383f.

pletely and effectually, as if it had been aimed from the bow of the sly little archer himself! The cruelty of your "attack" Sir, is the more barbarous and invidious, because it is impossible for me to perpetuate with it in *my own book*,—the real or fancied cause, I had, of provocation. Now Sir that I have given "a slap at um I think,"—would you have me "doff my helmet"? No No! There is really,—after all my repinings on the occasion,—a beneficial result, from being thus buried in the wilds of Wiltshire; for, *here* I have been an object of speculative interest to three of the ² choice "spirits of the age, deep, pure, and sparkling;—and this could never have happened, had I been floating about, with other motes, within their ken;—they would have scarcely seen, (certainly, not looked at me,) M^r Hazlitt would not have risked his neck; ²—M^r Lamb would not have forsworn himself,³ nor would you Sir, have mocked me with that exquisite compliment,—"that my face may possess something (only) better than beauty"! Alas for me!—

And now that my flight is over,—and that a sad consciousness of an unmerited compliment is forced upon me,—I can in calmer language, and in grave sincerity offer you my very grateful acknowledgements, for your great kindness, in devoting your valuable time, and elegant writing, to one who is unknown to you.

Gladly would I have waited even two more long years, could I have foreseen that at the end of them I should have been so richly rewarded for my patience. Excuse my apparent rudeness and unfeeling haste; and believe, that had I been able to surmise, that the pressure of sorrow and disappointment, had weighed so heavily upon you; and that my little book would

* "If you are old, ugly, and disagreeable, I'll be hanged" !—

† "*Swears*. . . . thou art glee provoking,—frankhearted" &c &c

² *Written* the the.

have added an iota to the load,—as, even “the grasshopper *can* be a burden”—believe, I repeat, that selfish as I may seem, I would not have written my former letter, even to obtain the boon you have so kindly bestowed, nor to be able to seize the privilege of assuring you Sir,³ dear Sir,—that I am proud to acknowledge myself, with real sympathy
 your's respectfully
 and very much obliged

Isabella Jane Towers.

I cannot be insensible to the flattering encouragement you give a scribbler of Nursery tales,—and gratefully thank you for your condescension; ⁴ Had I passed the compliment over in silence I feared it might be inferred that I received it as a matter of course;—and even to name it,—makes my little book and myself of too much importance;—but you Sir, will understand and judge me leniently.—

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J. H. REYNOLDS TO JAMES WINSTON ⁵

16 September 1831

Address: J. Winston Esq/ 3 Charles Street/ Covent Garden.

27 Golden Square

16 Sept. 1831

D^r Sir

I shall be happy to have <myself> my name inserted in

³ Sir changed from my.

⁴ *Sic.*

⁵ Winston (1779–1843) was secretary of the Garrick Club, founded 1831, and author of *The Theatric Tourist* (1805). Numerous volumes of theater programs and clippings about the stage compiled by him, as well as several manuscripts he wrote on theatrical subjects, are in the Theater

the list of original Members of the Garrick Club.—And I shall be obliged by your communicating my wish to the Committee

I am D^r Sir

Your faithf^l Serv^t

J. H. Reynolds

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J. H. REYNOLDS TO JOHN TAYLOR

31 October 1837

10 Great Marlbro S^t

31 Oct. 1837

Dear Taylor

We are now strangers,—We, who were “in the better part of your life, & the happiest part of mine” always together,—never now meet. There is a wish amongst a few of my private friends that some of my papers should be housed into volumes—and I who have walked through life with a skeleton of reputation without a particle of name, enter into this wish. You remember how sadly though how rapidly my work went off!—Five “subscribed” the Edition, though Longmans would not take a copy.¹ What can be done as to permission? Tell me. You

Collection at Harvard. In *The Garrick Club* (privately printed, New York, 1896), p. 42, R. H. Barham (1788–1845), author of *The Ingoldsby Legends*, included this notice of Reynolds: “An old schoolfellow of mine at St. Paul’s School; an attorney in Golden Square; author of ‘Peter Corcoran,’ and many other anonymous works of great merit, especially of a paper on Lady Mary W. Montagu in Bentley’s *Miscellany* and sundry papers in the *Athenaeum*.”

¹ Of Reynolds’ “Edward Herbert” articles in the *London Magazine* Marsh, p. 28, says: “Advertisements indicate a plan to publish them in book form ‘with etchings by George Cruikshank.’ The book seems never to have been issued . . .” Two of Cruikshank’s etchings for it are still in existence: see A. M. Cohn’s *George Cruikshank* (1924), p. 271.

have the right in the London Mag^e papers—is it not so?—I know—or think I know—that the style of publication is quite out of your way—but if it be so—I do not think you will withhold from me the chance of whispering my very important secret to the public. I give you my word at this moment I have not a Publisher in my eye— But one may, with your leave, occur.—

What days—were *the* days of the London!—I “try back”² as the Huntsman says—over the hours of Early-Hood—Earnest-Hessey—bleak D^r Darling—twinkling Clare,—“tipsy-joy & jollity”—Lamb—Drear-Carey,—Long-tailed Cunningham—and beautiful M^{rs} Jones!³—Where are all?—or most of them?—

I am always dabbling with my pen—like a grey-headed Duckling—old in myself—but young in my love of the stream. You are always publishing good books—which are quite out of my line

Yours truly

J H Reynolds

—I *do* believe I am asking you for nothing—and it is the thing usually conceded to requests asking more.

² *NED* defines as “to go back . . . so as to cover ground afresh where something has previously been missed” and dates its first example 1816.

³ See I, 26on., II, 20gn. This letter was seen and referred to by Blunden, p. 96.

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JANE REYNOLDS HOOD TO (?)¹

August (?) 1844

M^r Hood commenced his Literary career as Sub Editor of the London Magazine in 1822.²

.The Plea of the ³ Fairies &c / serious/ 1827

.2 series of Whims & Oddities each a vol 1826-1827

. National Tales 2 vols.—1827

.Epping Hunt—1829

Editor of the Gem an Annual in 1829 in which he wrote his serious poem of Eugene Aram—afterwards published alone with illustrations by Harvey.⁴

.10 Comic Annuals commencing .1830⁵ 7 of which were republished as “Hoods Own” with additions and Reminiscences of Life

¹ In July, 1844, Hood went to Blackheath to recuperate for two months and returned to London in September (*Memorials of Thomas Hood . . . By His Daughter* [Boston, 1860], II, 198f., 206f.). Mrs. Hood mentions a lawsuit “which will be settled in Sept^r.” Perhaps she was writing to F. O. Ward, who edited *Hood’s Magazine* during her husband’s absence.

² Really 1821, his first contribution being in the July issue (*Memorials of Thomas Hood*, I, 7).

³ Actually of the *Midsummer*.

⁴ William Harvey (1796-1866), engraver and designer.

⁵ 1830-1839.

. Tylney Hall a Novel in 3 vols in 1834

. Up the Rhine. 1 vol

Was a contributor at different periods to the Literary Souvenir—Forget me not—Friendships Offering—Athenæum (in which he published his letters on the Copyright) ⁷ Literary Gazette—New Monthly Magazine in 1840 which articles were republished as another Comic ⁸ in 1842 when he commenced Editing the N M. During his Editorship he wrote the articles which were re-collected as Whimsicalities ⁹—

As far as I can trace Mr Hood must have made between 8 and 9 hundred designs on the wood— He went abroad in March 1835 and returned to England in 1840

His money annoyances began about 1833 or 4 caused by the failure of Mr Wright ¹⁰—and his ill health and first attack of hemorrhage from the lungs was in 1835—

On his return to England his Publishers accounts were so incorrect that he resolved to <take> remove his works elsewhere ¹¹ when M^r Bailey retained them *all* on the plea that he had a quarter share <in the profits> of *one*—The “Hoods Own”—instead of a quarter share of the *profits only*— This was

⁶ Frankfurt-am-Main, 1840.

⁷ April 15, 22, 29, 1837, pp. 263-265, 285-287, 304-306; June 11, 18, 1842, pp. 524-526, 544f. (the first three are reprinted in *Memorials*, II, 258-299).

⁸ Called volume XI.

⁹ Two vols., 1844.

¹⁰ A more explicit statement than one can find elsewhere on the cause of Hood's financial embarrassments (see L. A. Marchand, *Letters of Thomas Hood* [1945], pp. 12, 103). *Memorials*, I, 46, says merely, “At the end of 1834, by the failure of a firm my father suffered. . . .”

¹¹ Hood's lawsuit with A. H. Baily and Company is treated very sketchily both in *Memorials*, II, 76f., and in Walter Jerrold's *Thomas Hood* (1907), pp. 340f. The latter says it was decided in Hood's favor after his death. See also Marchand, pp. 52, 103; *NQ*, December, 1953, pp. 534-536.

decided by a verdict in Hoods favour a few months back and Judge Tenterdon ¹² expressed it as his opinion that a share of the profits did not mean a share of the copyright but being a contract he was compelled to refer <it> to the Judges in Banco—which will be settled in Sept^r— But the delay of 3 or 4 years has ruined the property—

I have as far as possible collected in haste all these particulars— I beleive they are tollerably correct—

When I saw Hood on Saturday he desired me on sending to you to enquire for Lady Willoughbys ¹³ book—will you send it by George if you have it— I shall go to Blackheath I think tomorrow—and will take any letters &c you have for Hood— Please to send him proofs & all information you can about the Mag—as he will else get restless and desire to return home—and its very important that he shall remain at Blackheath during this fine weather he is so much better for the change

Yours very truly

Jane Hood

¹² If her dates are correct, this cannot have been Charles Abbott, first Baron Tenterden of Hendon (1762–1832), Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench,—the only Judge Tenterden listed in Edward Fane's *Biographia Juridica* (1870).

¹³ H. M. Rathbone's fictitious diary of Elizabeth Willoughby, Baroness Willoughby of Parham, was reviewed in *Hood's Magazine*, July, 1844 (II, 96–103).

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR ¹

16 June 1858

A few sentences are printed by Blunden, p. 221.

Brighstone I W

June 16. 1858

My dear old Friend

I have taken some pains to answer satisfactorily M^r Broderip's Letter respecting her Father, our late friend Tho' Hood, but I do not like to send my letter without first shewing it to you, lest I should have mis-stated any thing, or omitted any particular which would be interesting or desirable for her to know. If you have any alteration or addition to suggest, please to return it to me and I will forward it from hence—if not, will you be so good as to seal it and send it on at once to M^r Broderip. It was interesting to me to look back through the Numbers of the old Magazine and painful to observe how large a number of <them> the Contributors are no more. I see I have not included your Name in the list of Contributors, nor mentioned you as Editor—would you like your name to be known as Editor or not? I have added a Postscript ² containing this information which I think ought to be given, as the credit of managing & editing the *best Literary Magazine* that ever appeared certainly belongs to you, and it is worthy of no slight praise. How poor the work became under the Management of Southerne! ³ I was very sorry that both Hood and Reynolds

¹ Written, like No. 350, on mourning paper.

² It was not printed in the *Memorials of Thomas Hood*.

³ Henry Southern, of Serjeant's Inn, bought the *London Magazine* in 1825.

left us so entirely, especially Reynolds, after the great intimacy that had so long existed between us. I don't think either you or I intentionally gave any cause for it, and I am sure they both were under great obligations to us.

I see, from a notice in the *Illustrated News* that the Edward Moxon,⁴ whose name appeared in the obituary of the *Times* a short time ago, was the publisher in Dover Street. I fancied him comparatively a young man and could not have supposed it was he who had departed. But time flies rapidly and imperceptibly, so that we awake every now and then, and are surprised to find our contemporaries old men, and that we too are not still young.

We are mourning the departure of our Manningford Sisters who have been spending a month with us— I accompanied them yesterday to Yarmouth on their way to Lymington where they are visiting Mr Grant. Drusilla is very well, but Mary I am sorry to say is but poorly. Can you come down and spend a quiet week or two or three with us while the fine weather lasts and the Country is in all its beauty? A little change, “a slight vicissitude and fit of poverty”⁵ would do you good, and it would be very pleasant to us to have you here. M^{rs} Hessey joins me in kindest regards

Believe me ever

Your affectionate old Friend

J. A. Hessey

J. Taylor Esq.

⁴ See No. 200 and the *Illustrated London News*, June 12, 1858, p. 583.

⁵ Dryden's version of Horace's *Odes*, iii.29.

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOHN TAYLOR

15 August 1860

A few sentences are quoted by Blunden, pp. 221f.

Manningford 15 Aug. 1860

My dear old Friend

You have done me a great favor in sending me the first volume of our friend Hood's memoirs. I have scarcely laid it down since it arrived, and I look forward with much pleasure to the appearance of the second. I did rather hope to receive one from the Editors, as one of his earliest friends, and I should have valued it exceedingly as the memorial of a man whom I sincerely regarded. It was always to me a subject of great regret that our acquaintance with him and Reynolds ceased, I scarcely know how & why. The perusal of this volume, especially of the earlier part of it, has brought back many pleasing recollections of by-gone times, and of persons once beloved but now no more. I had a great regard and esteem for M^{rs} Hood, and I look back with much pleasure to many happy evenings passed with Hood in the society of her and her family at their hospitable house in Little Britain. M^{rs} Reynolds was a remarkably nice person, and her daughters very interesting and accomplished— I wonder whether any of them are still alive— I was much struck with the remark in the "Memoir" that you and I have survived nearly all our Contributors.¹ It is an awful thought. I believe

¹ In *Memorials of Thomas Hood. Collected, Arranged, and Edited by His Daughter* [Frances Freeling Boderip]. *With a Preface and Notes by His Son* [Thomas Hood] (2 vols., London, Boston, 1860), I, 5. The book also quotes (I, 5-9) Hesse, giving his list of Hood's contributions to the *London Magazine*.

our friend Strong,² Procter, Clare, and perhaps Bernard Barton³ (for I have not heard of him for years) are all that remain of that goodly company, and one of them⁴ is as though he were not! Rice I believe has been long dead. Do you know whether Bailey is still alive? How shocked he would be at finding himself called *a* M^r Bailey.⁵ I never knew the late M^r Moxon.⁶ I always intended to call on him and ask for a portrait of Hood and of Charles Lamb, but my reluctance to make new acquaintance deterred me till it was too late. We had a copy of Charles Lamb's Works in 8^{vo} and I had illustrated it with that curious pen & ink sketch of him, and a portrait of Coleridge, but Frank⁷ has I believe given it away or lent it to somebody. I cannot well write to Moxon to ask him for a Copy of the Memoir of Hood, but I should like to have one. I will endeavour, from my Set of the Magazine, to make out a list of all Reynolds's Papers when I return to Kensington.

I forgot in my last letter, which was all about the New Testament, to ask you to thank Mr. Strong for his permission to copy the Sonnets— The three which I chose were, the description of himself "*In health, not rich*" &c The Bulfinch "*A gentle dame*"—and The death of the Parrot "*Well may I mourn,*" they are very pretty. I am glad to hear of M^r Potters remark on the Pyramid. That article on Spiritualism is indeed wonderful—it goes beyond all others that I have seen— There

² Rev. Charles Strong (1785–1864), Fellow of Wadham College. See Blunden, p. 247. His *Sonnets* was published in 1835 and, with additions, in 1862. A. M. Woodford, *The Book of Sonnets* (1841), p. ix, remarks, "To the Rev. Charles Strong I return many thanks, who so kindly presented me with a volume of his elegant sonnets," and then reprints (pp. 222–225) eight of them.

³ He died in 1849.

⁴ Clare, who had been in a madhouse since 1837.

⁵ In the *Memorials*, I, 10.

⁶ See II, 115, 167.

⁷ Falkner probably. See II, 377n.

was an Article somewhat to the same effect in a late number of the "All the year round." ⁸—We have still very dismal weather for Aug. 15.—S^t Swithin has had just one months *rain*—Ten days more will perhaps bring a little Summer if not too late. We all unite in kindest regards. Believe me ever

Your affectionate old friend

J. A. Hessey

John Taylor Esq.

⁸ "Modern Magic" in the issue of July 28, 1860 (III, 370-374). Another appeared on September 15 (III, 540-545).

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While there is one general entry for John Keats, it is extremely general; references to Keats, for the most part, have been indexed under specific topics, such as Attacks, Death, Finances, Health, etc. All titled persons have been indexed under their family names. Women have been indexed under their married names, with their maiden names given if possible. There are no references in this index to secondary sources or bibliographical matter. No place names have been indexed.

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MORE LETTERS AND POEMS OF

THE
KEATS
CIRCLE

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THE
KEATS
CIRCLE

HYDER EDWARD ROLLINS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
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1965

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MORE LETTERS AND POEMS OF

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INTRODUCTION

I

In 1953 Dr. Ernesto Paradinas y Brockmann,¹ of Avila, Spain, sold a number of letters and notes written by or to his great-grandmother, Fanny Keats de Llanos, sister of John Keats, to Mr. Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., who then generously gave them to the Harvard Keats Collection. Among them are a few oddly stilted and unrevealing letters from Señora Llanos to various members of her family and many more from Joseph Severn, H. Buxton Forman, Sir Charles W. Dilke, and the American children and grandchildren of George Keats.

By far the most interesting and important items are the forty connected with George Keats, Fanny Keats, and Severn herewith printed. In the first group (1814–1832) there are twenty letters written by George Keats: fifteen to Fanny Keats, one to her Spanish husband Valentin Llanos y Gutierrez, two jointly to Fanny and Llanos, and one each to Richard Abbey, long the guardian of the Keats children, and to John Hamilton Reynolds, perhaps John Keats's closest friend. The other items are one letter each from Valentin and Fanny Llanos to George Keats, one from Miss L. Manning, a previously unheard of friend, to Fanny, and two autograph poems by George which show that the poetic mantle of John did not fall on his brother's shoulders. The second group (1861–1879) contains sixteen letters to Señora Llanos, thirteen by Severn, one by Sir Charles W. Dilke, and two by George's daughter, Emma Frances Speed. One of George's letters was printed in 1883 by Forman, who also gave very brief extracts from four others. But, on the whole, this new collection, small as it is, presents fresh information that

¹ See Willard B. Pope's account (with a picture of the doctor, his wife, and his eight children) of a visit to him in the *Keats-Shelley Journal*, II (1953), 118.

will necessitate a partial rewriting of the biographies of the personages concerned.

It is a pity that these documents turned up too late to be included, where they really belong, in *The Keats Circle* (1948), for most of them answer or are answered by letters in those volumes or explain matters therein discussed. Like *The Keats Circle* itself, they give many facts of interest about the poet but far more about his relatives and his acquaintances, the Brawnes, Reynolds, James Rice, Abbey, C. W. Dilke, Joseph Severn, as well as incidental information about Taylor and Hessey, Michael Drury, Wilkinson, and others whose names are familiar to every student of the poet.

George Keats no doubt was, as he claims (No. 6), the person who best understood his brother, the only one "who was fitted to relieve him of its [the world's] friction." Almost every word he wrote is, in one way or another, a vital part of the poet's biography, and probably scholars will never cease arguing whether he did or did not treat his brother unfairly in financial matters. The question of George's probity, fought over so bitterly by Charles Brown and William Haslam versus Dilke in the 1820's, turns up in every contemporary life of the poet.

These new letters throw brilliant light on the actions and characters of George Keats and Fanny Keats and her husband. The earliest letter by any member of the Keats family yet found, No. 1 below, was written by George to Fanny in 1814. But he was not a punctilious correspondent, and after he had left England in 1820, for the second time, without telling Fanny good-bye (No. 2), they were more or less estranged. For a short while John Keats kept Fanny informed of George's doings, but during his long, final illness in England and Italy, and after his death, they drifted literally a whole world apart.

The fault lay chiefly with Fanny, who had heard, perhaps from the Reynoldses or Haslam (she did not know Brown), of George's alleged heartlessness and dishonesty in stripping his brother of money to carry back to Kentucky. She and John had

been devoted, and the letters he wrote to her are perfect examples of how an older person should address a child. On the contrary, George and Fanny were not really sympathetic. With a wife and children, he found it hard to grasp and sympathize with her girlish problems, and he could never cast off a sort of elder brother's patronizing and stuffiness. Though John Keats's fiancée, Fanny Brawne, had defended George in a letter of May, 1821,² Fanny Keats, unconvinced, remained silent, while from Louisville the puzzled George wrote several letters of complaint. Even the letter (see No. 3) in which he "commiserated" with her on John's death was unacknowledged. In February, 1824 (No. 4), he lamented, "The last time I heard from you was thro' our dear John." Fanny did write at least once before May, 1824 (see No. 5), but she had large reservations about his dishonorable conduct until the following August, when Mrs. Dilke persuaded her that he "is still and ever will be an honourable man."³

None the less, Fanny never confided in George, even when she was in love with and then engaged to Llanos. Instead she merely wrote cryptically (see No. 5) about her supposed Spanish-looking face and about a "change of life" she was contemplating, the latter remark being interpreted by George as meaning that she was ill-advised enough to contemplate moving from the home of her guardian Abbey. Automatically he expostulated, urging her to remain with that "straightforward, candid man." Fanny had always disliked both Abbey and his wife, and the chief irritant she found in George's letters was his unfailing praise of that "good man M^r Abbey." Then, as she came of age, she feared that Abbey, after a series of business reverses, had jeopardized her inheritance. Fanny Brawne (June 16, 1824), to be sure, attempted to remove these fears. "My brother," she wrote, thinks there is "not the slightest reason to alarm yourself as M^r A. is considered beyond all dispute as a man of large property—The *losses* you mentioned are well known in the city

² *Letters of F.B.*, pp. 33f.

³ Adami, p. 108.

but he is considered very rich in spite of them.”⁴ But Fanny Keats’s apprehensions were irremovable, and it could hardly have been pleasing when George in February, 1824 (No. 4), harped as usual on Abbey in “whose integrity, and goodness of Heart the utmost reliance may be placed.” John had known of his sister’s unhappiness as a ward of the Abbeyes, and had tactfully advised her how to deal with them. On the contrary, George, in addition to praising Abbey’s goodness, urged her (No. 5) not to “intrust any one but M^r Abbey with your property” just when Fanny, more fearful than ever that he had squandered or stolen all her money, had left Abbey’s house. Undoubtedly she took the keenest satisfaction in writing to George on May 31, 1826, about the machinations of “that consummate villain Abbey”—and in announcing casually her marriage. “We are doing every thing in our power,” she went on, “to oblige Abbey to refund the money; but I fear we shall not be successful. I thought you knew he was not an honest man from principle, but merely because he had no occasion to rob being at the time you were in England possessed of considerable property.”⁵ George’s surprise and disillusionment (No. 9) are almost comical, yet he took Fanny to task for not having earlier disclosed the villainy, and characteristically added that she had endangered his own prospects by failing to do so.

The usual story has been, as Edgcumbe phrases it, that “Fanny Keats had considerable difficulty in obtaining from Richard Abbey the money of which he had control. Charles Wentworth Dilke came to her aid, and eventually she received not only her share of the money left by her grandmother, but also that due to her from the estates of her brothers John and Tom.”⁶ Mrs. Adami agrees that “Dilke came to her help and dealt with Abbey firmly enough to obtain all that belonged to her.”⁷ Actually

⁴ *Letters of F.B.*, p. 97.

⁵ *KC I*, 297f.

⁶ *Letters of F.B.*, p. 99.

⁷ Adami, p. 117.

Valentin Llanos (No. 19) claimed the credit for forcing Abbey to mortgage and then sell his Walthamstow property to repay Fanny Llanos, and both the Llanoses severely criticize Dilke for his inactive, almost hostile, role. The letters (No. 19-23) discussing Abbey's financial shenanigans and giving particulars about the troubles of the Llanoses and George with the unbusinesslike law firm of Rice and Reynolds, John Keats's dear friends, and its successor, Reynolds and Simmons (or Symons), show clearly that a full and complete account of the settling of the Keats estate is yet to be written.

George's illusions about Abbey, then Fanny's concern with her immediate family, imperiled their attachment, and at times both wrote brusquely. As a good businessman, George was disturbed by Llanos' disastrous or impractical schemes for making money by selling newfangled bridle bits in England or by exporting wine to America, and he said so with considerable vigor. As his own wealth accumulated, however, he generously instructed his and Fanny's shaky (he feared shady) London lawyers to see that she got all the money due her from Abbey before his own claim was considered, although, again as a man of business, he expressed great eagerness for every penny owing to him.

The correspondence is a melancholy record of misunderstandings. Fanny Llanos, indeed, nursed an imaginary grievance about George's supposed neglect of her, his indifference to her welfare. She took him harshly to task for not having transported her from London to Louisville, complaining that his rare invitations had been formal and insincere. George defended himself (No. 22) bluntly but with good humor, only to have Llanos write for her to copy a note (No. 23) phrased in the coldest, most unsisterly language, reproaching George for his failure to make a loan of £100 she had requested. It is remarkable, too, that when Mrs. George Keats and her children visited London in 1828-1829 the Llanoses paid almost no attention to them (No. 16). That the relations between brother and sister continued to

be strained and then became nonexistent was in the main the latter's fault. After the Llanoses moved to Spain in the summer of 1833, George had no word from them at least up to March, 1838.⁸ Perhaps he had none before he died on December 24, 1841, and certainly Fanny knew nothing of his death until late in 1848.⁹ No doubt regretting the past, henceforth, as the Paradinas collection proves, she kept on fairly close terms by correspondence with George's family, no member of which she ever actually saw.

Few as the letters are, they tell many other interesting things about the tangled finances of the Keats children: as when George (to his honor) instructs Abbey to pay debts contracted by his brother to the amount of £319, and observes that the latter had loaned to the lawyer Wilkinson £50 which had not been repaid; or when the Llanoses, who owed George some £616, plaintively rehearse their almost hopeless dealings with Abbey, Rice, Reynolds, and Dilke. They also give previously unknown facts about Fanny Llanos' various London addresses, her friendship with Miss Manning, the date of her departure for Spain, her staunch defense of Fanny Brawne that forced George, who had long regarded Miss Brawne as "an artful bad hearted Girl," to change his opinion. George himself in a remarkably detached, if engaging, fashion analyzes the characters of his wife and children; gives the dates, not before recorded, of the death of his daughter Rosalind and the birth of Isabel; tells anecdotes about some personal friends like Charles Briggs and John Bull; and establishes pretty closely the dates of his wife's departure for Europe and her return to New York. He emerges from the correspondence as an intelligent, cool-headed, attractive gentleman who was entirely worthy of the respect and deference paid to him by his great brother.

⁸ *KC* II, 32.

⁹ *KC* II, 251.

II

When the letters of George Keats ended in 1832, Fanny Llanos was a happy, somewhat self-centered young matron. In March, 1861, when she, her husband, and her children Juan and Rosa joined her son-in-law and daughter, Leopold and Isabel Llanos Brockmann, in Rome, she was a serene grandmother of fifty-eight. The preceding January, Joseph Severn, after a twenty-years' residence in England, had been appointed British consul at Rome, where he was, as he continued to be, widely known and admired. "His geniality," said the painter George Richmond, "charmed every member of the Roman society, from high officials at the Vatican to the humblest traveler," and in his house "were to be found the foremost men and women of the day."¹⁰

Appropriately enough, Fanny Llanos first met Severn by accident on April 6 in the very room where her brother John had died. The meeting was a shock but a delight to both. "For a long time," Severn wrote, "we remained without being able to speak. 'Twas like a brother and sister who had parted in early life meeting after forty years."¹¹ Severn immediately took the whole Llanos-Brockmann family into his heart, and although his personal association with them was brief (they left Italy in the fall of 1864), the friendship, kept alive by correspondence, was terminated only by his death in 1879. His thirteen letters that Fanny Llanos preserved (various others failed to reach her) were written at intervals between 1861 and 1877, when Severn's age was from sixty-seven to eighty-three. In their shaky spelling and unsteady handwriting, no less than in their forgetful repetitiousness, they show the deteriorating effects of age, but they also show how to the end of his long life he venerated, indeed worshiped, the memory of "the illustrious poet" whose unextinguished spirit had already successfully pleaded against

¹⁰ Anna M. W. Stirling, *The Richmond Papers* (London, 1926), p. 43.

¹¹ Adami, p. 155.

Oblivion for the name "Severn." The painter William Bewick had written of him in November, 1850: "His tenderness and affection for the poet was as strong as the love of a woman; and as I knew Keats, poor fellow, I now love my friend Severn. . . He is as honourable and dear a fellow as ever breathed, with a noble and generous spirit, and the feeling of a true gentleman." ¹²

The thirteen letters fill small gaps in Mrs. Adami's biography of Fanny Keats, making it evident, for instance, that the Llanoses and the Brockmanns left Rome early in July, 1861, for Naples, where they remained for over a year. They also give previously unrecorded facts about Fanny's residences, her friends (Emma Novello, Lord Ampthill, the Countess of Castle Stewart, and others), and various members of her family—her son Luis, who seems in 1873 to have been connected with the Spanish embassy in Rome, Count Brockmann, her son-in-law, who invented some sort of an impractical contraption "for the bridge twixt Dover & Calais," and Rosa, her musical daughter, as "the *pearl*," or most beautiful figure, in Severn's picture, "The Marriage of Cana."

About himself Severn is only incidentally informative, but whenever a first-rate biography is written these letters will have to be taken into account. His biographers, William Sharp and the Countess of Birkenhead, no doubt would have been interested in his comments on the slow progress of "The Marriage of Cana," "the best of all my works," on the date at which he moved into the Palazzo Poli, and on the structural changes made in that house during later years. Very interesting are his observations about the attacks on himself as consul by six Englishmen, "even to killing me of[f]," his relations with the king of Italy, and his apparently unwise investment of £1000 in stock of the new Marcian Acqueduct. Of considerable interest, too, are the remarks about his two pensions, the one hundred thirty prisoners of the Vatican whose liberation he had secured,

¹² Thomas Landseer, *Life and Letters of William Bewick* (London, 1871), II, 150.

the "imprisonment" of the pope in 1871, and the enormous changes brought into the life of Rome when it displaced Florence as the capital. His offhand references to ill health are melancholy reminders that old age itself is a disease, but those to his children are always proudly cheerful.

Severn's wife died before she could join him at the consulate, and, after his sons and daughters married, he was a very lonely man. Naturally he was pleased by the fine marriages they all, in spite of being a poor artist's children, had made. Especially gratifying was Arthur's marriage to the beautiful Joan Agnew, ward and cousin of "the great Art Critic" John Ruskin, who at least pretended to rank Arthur as a painter with his adored Joseph Turner. But when the even more talented Ann Mary Severn Newton, who had painted various members of the royal family, died in 1866, Severn sustained a blow from which, he told the sympathetic Señora Llanos, he never expected to recover. With the unconscious pathos of the aged, in three different letters he reminded her of how "odd" it felt to have no responsibilities but himself: "I have always been thinking of others & *never of myself*." But the lack of responsibilities merely increased his loneliness, and as old age steadily crept on he became more and more sentimental about Keats and Fanny. Letters to or from her inevitably brought vivid recollections of the bitter, if painfully dear, period, the finest in his life, when from September, 1820, to February, 1821, he had tenderly watched over the dying poet and thereby gained a kind of immortality. Small wonder that he missed the "charming" Llanos family, always hoped that they would revisit Rome, and described in 1869 his meeting with Fanny as "*a romance aye & is so still*." To her he wrote his final letter on August 5, 1877, fifty-seven years after he had escorted her brother to Rome, in it telling of "a life size portrait of the illustrious Poet" he was beginning and of "a picture of Isabella & the pot of Basil I have just done." Severn died on August 3, 1879. He was a good man—a far better man than artist—whose name should always be mentioned with honor. If his letters are without literary value and are, indeed,

rather pitiful, that is primarily the fault of Time, the devourer of everything, even goodness.

In the final letters of the present series, Sir Charles W. Dilke, grandson of Keats's friend, informed Mme. Llanos of Harry Buxton Forman's having published Keats's love letters to Fanny Brawne (1878), an editorial act of which he vigorously and vehemently disapproved, and added a remarkable statement about the incompleteness of that book; while George Keats's daughter, Emma Frances Speed, comments on the love letters and on the poet's tombstone, which she had helped restore.

Fanny Llanos died at Madrid on December 16, 1889, nearly sixty-nine years after her brother John's death in Rome. She had outlived George Keats by forty-eight and her admirer Severn by ten years. She was in no sense a rival of Dorothy Wordsworth, but because of her associations she has, like George Keats, a definite place in English literary history.

III

The three letters recently acquired by the Harvard Keats Collection and added in the Appendix present Keats's publishers in a strange, new light—and add to one's sympathy for Severn's trials. If it be thought that they have an excess of "evangelicalism," at any rate they show how dearly Taylor and Hessey loved their young poet-friend, and how highly and truly they valued Severn's services to him.¹³

¹³ The following works are cited only by the name of their authors: Marie Adami, *Fanny Keats* (London, 1937); the Countess of Birkenhead, *Against Oblivion: The Life of Joseph Severn* (London, 1943); William Sharp, *The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* (London, 1892). *The Keats Circle*, ed. Hyder E. Rollins (2 vols.; Harvard University Press, 1948), is cited as KC; M. B. Forman's *The Letters of John Keats* (Oxford University Press, 1952) as *Letters*; Fred Edgcombe's *Letters of Fanny Brawne to Fanny Keats* (Oxford University Press, 1936) as *Letters of F.B.*; H. B. Forman's *The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats* (4 vols.; London, 1883) as *F.*

Canceled letters or words in the documents are printed in shaped brackets ({}), letters or words torn off or erased in curly braces ({}), editorial insertions in square brackets ([]). Three asterisks (***) indicate that part of the letter is missing.

» I «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

1814¹

Address: To/ Miss. F. M. Keats

Pancras Lane

My dearest Fanny

I herewith send you a peice of silk and pastboard to make (me) a shade for my Eyes, which you will have the goodness when finished to return to Mr² Abbey's who I have no doubt will be so good as to forward it to Pancras Lane. With this you will receive a skipping-rope which I purchased in order to encourage you to jump and skipp about, to avoid those nasty Chilblanes that so troubled you last Winter, perhaps Mr Bourke will teach you the skipping-rope hornpipe, you can as well practice it in play hours by way of Amusement, and at the same time improvement. Your poor Grandmother has been very ill indeed, but she is now recovering fast, she desires her love to you. Your brothers join in their love to you, and hope you use all your endeavours to improve, particularly in music; I can assure you they love you most affectionately, and will do any thing in their power to make you happy which I have no doubt will succeed provided you will at the same time make yourself *good*. I am now happy in subscribing myself the first Time

Dearest Sister

Your most affectionate Brother

George Keats

Let me have the shade as soon as possible—in the note I say that your Brothers love you—mind—I mean to include myself—
Friday morning—

¹ Fanny Keats was visiting someone, probably her guardian Richard Abbey at Walthamstow, during the illness of her grandmother, Alice (Mrs. John) Jennings, who died shortly before December 19, 1814. George wrote, on paper watermarked with the date 1814, from his quarters above Abbey's counting

room at 4 Pancras Lane, Cheapside. He calls the letter his first to his sister, and it is the earliest yet found by any of the Keats family.

² Originally M^{rs}.

»» 2 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS¹

30 January 1820

Printed by F, IV, 391–393.²

Liverpool—Sunday Morn—Jan^y. 30th 1819³—

My dear Fanny

I considered not taking a final leave of you a misfortune, and regretted very much that constant occupation detained me from coming to Walthamstow; but now I look upon the pain attending the last good bye, and shake of the hand as well spared, and reflect on the pleasure of seeing you again at however remote a period; when you will be a *Woman* and I a '*bald Pate*.' I arrived here last night after a rather disagreeable ride of 36 hours, and engaged a passage in the *Courier*—Captⁿ Eldridge, for New York before I went to bed; she will sail on the first, Tuesday next. In this said English Feather bed I was in a greater risk to lose my life than thro' all my journey from Louisville to London. Before going to bed I thought it prudent to clear my stomach of bile, and took calomel; a cold taken while this is operating on the system frequently proves fatal, it opens the pores of the skin, and allows the inflammation to lay complete hold of one. Not having slept for two nights, I remained dead asleep while water was dripping thro' the ceiling untill it had penetrated through⁴ all the clothes, the feather bed and the mattress. The instant I awoke I jumped out of bed, called the Servants and was put into a fresh bed, fully expecting to be laid up, but this morning to my astonishment I find myself well; you see if I can stand water when it nearly floats me in my bed without injury, I cannot be born to be drowned. Mr Abbey

behaved very kindly to me before I left for which I am sure you will feel grateful. He is attentive in his commerce with his fellows in all essentials. He observes with pleasure, the pleasure communicated to others; he says you sometimes look thin and pale, but he thinks that you have been better since you have run about a little feeding chickens, attending your little Cat &c. A man of coarse feeling would never notice these things. He expressed surprise that neither you nor Miss A.—(should not speak) spoke at meals; so you see it is not his wish that you should be moped and silent, therefore cheer up and look lively as nature made you.⁵ I shall hear from John from time to time about you, as you will of me. I am

dear Fanny

Your very affectionate Brother

George.

¹ In pencil on the upper left-hand corner Fred Holland Day, during a visit to the Llanos family at Madrid (see Rollins and Parrish, *Keats and the Bostonians* [Harvard University Press, 1951], pp. 5-7), wrote, "Copied/ FD./ Dec. '90."

² On June 18, 1881, H. B. Forman wrote to Fanny Keats de Llanos, returning the three letters of her brother George which she had lent to him. He also made some use of two others in the 1883 edition of Keats.

³ F 1820. Actually George left London in the early morning of January 28, 1820 (*Letters*, p. 455). He also misdated the letter, very similar to this one, that he wrote to John Keats on January 30 (*Letters*, p. 456).

⁴ F thro'.

⁵ Keats refers to this matter in his letter of February 6, 1820, to Fanny (*Letters*, p. 458).

» 3 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

7 January 1822

*Address: per favour of M^r C. Wylie./ Miss F. M. Keats/ 4 Pancrass Lane/
London/ At. Richard Abbey Esq^r*/ One brief extract—"I had hoped
before . . . make you comfortable"—is printed by F, IV, 395f.*

Louisville. Kentucky. Jan 7. 1822

My dearest Fanny

I have to entreat your forgiveness for not writing more frequently, but what can I write about; my affairs do not go on so badly or prosperously as to be worth communicating, of the manners of the People and of the country in which we live you were fully informed in my former letters. Its politics varying every day would be interesting only to the lovers and haters of democracy; to you such discussions would be dulness. To be sure our health might be communicated from time to time, but when we feel ourselves well it seems thinking much of ourselves to put you to the expense of letters to inform you of it, when we are sick we delay writing untill we can send better news. Nothing to say, seems a common foolish excuse, altho I must urge it; at this distance with posts so uncertain and dilatory, we cannot indulge ourselves with the form of a regular correspondence, the space of 6 months between question and answer is enough to freeze the most interesting subject; All we can hope for is that nature and education have formed our hearts to retain affection without the assistance of adventitious circumstances. I hope four or five years will bring us to England, to effect this grand object I work early and late, with industry and perseverance that astonishes the lazy Kentuckians, this coming year I expect to reap my harvest; last year I should have done *very well* but for the extreme sickliness of the season; besides being (ailing) positively confined to my bed 3 mos as well as my

dear Wife and younges[t] child Rosaline,¹ we were ailing 2 mos more, the child is still poorly. Extra of my ^{usual} former expenses and the loss attending the Mill's not working 3 mos (in consequence of the sickness of the hands, and mine) I spent £150. This has been a heavy trial to us, but thank God, we met the last day in the year in the same circumstances and spirits that we began it. I hoped before this to receive² from you an answer of my letter to you, commiserating with you on the death of our dear Brother; that dreadful misfortune leaves us more necessary to each others happiness; it leaves me your natural Guardian and if circumstances should throw you from under the Protection of that good Man Mr Abbey, I have a happy and cheerful home to make you comfortable. The Gentleman (Mr Brooks,³ stationer, Oxford Street.) who will bring this, will probably return to America, I will direct him to advise you when, and shall expect (the) your memoirs by him, however you must write directly by post, as much as can be put in a sheet of letter paper. Your Sister and prattling neice⁴ desire their love, but that Mr A's family live so retired I should request Mrs Keats' Brother's and Mother⁵ to come and see you and invite you out, but I am persuaded such a proceeding would displease them, and we owe them too much to treat their wishes with disrespect. I shall enclose this to Charles Wylie and direct him to deliver it personally, if Mrs A. pleases to invite him to repeat his call all will be well, if not he is too proud to go where he is not welcome.⁶ He has been educated a merchant, and is as far as I can learn clever, I am sure he has a good heart. Present my respects to Mr Mrs and Miss Abbey. I will write to Mr A by this opportunity I fear he thinks I am doing badly, it is true I have not done well, but I have stemmed the torrent of bad success, obtained some experience, and am now sailing steadily towards success.

I am, my dear Fanny, Your affectionate Friend & Brother

George Keats.

¹ Or Rosalind (died 1826). See pp. 34f., below.

² *F* to have received.

³ John Brooks, 421 Oxford Street. See *KC* I, 170.

⁴ Georgiana Emily (1819–1856), later Mrs. Alfred Gwathmey.

⁵ Charles and Henry Wylie and Mrs. James Wylie.

⁶ Fanny Brawne wrote to Fanny Keats in August, 1822 (*Letters of F.B.*, p. 75): "I met M^r Wylie a short time ago, and he told me he believed his brother had called on you."

» 4 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

February 1824

Address: Miss. F. Keats./—to the care of Rich^d Abbey Esq^r*/ Pancrass Lane/ London/ England

My dear Fanny

Louisville. Kentucky. North America

The time is so long since I heard of or from you, that I must again endeavour to obtain some intelligence thro' the medium of the post, altho' it has so often failed. I cannot suppose for an instant that you have neglected to answer the letters you have rec^d if indeed they have come to hand; either your's or mine have invariably miscarried, and continual disappointment makes me despair of hearing from you more: I shall however try every means before I give up with the feeling that you no longer desire the correspondence. The last time I heard from you was thro' our dear John,¹ whose loss if possible renders us more interesting to each other and leaves me your only natural protector. While you are under the care of M^r Abbey I feel comparatively easy knowing him to be a man upon whose integrity, and goodness of Heart the utmost reliance may be placed.² In the mean time it is well that we should understand from each other our mutual progress in life, in the hope that our fates assisted by our inclinations will eventually bring us together, I should be most unhappy to give up the Idea of again seeing you and the glorious land that gave me birth. M^{rs} Keats is continually speaking of you, and never having had a sister herself builds much

on an intimate connection with you, and I am persuaded that had you the slightest knowledge of her character you would look with the greatest pleasure to the time when you will become acquainted with her. It must be somewhat interesting to you to have two little neices who, in learning their Alphabet say F for Fanny, and talk about aunt Fanny.—The eldest is a very clever child and can read a little, has very dark eyes something like John in the face, and is called most beautiful, her name is Georgiana, the second Rosalind has dark eyes but of a light complection and hair like your's used to be, she is called very pretty but is not so quick as Georgiana perhaps in consequence of having suffered so much sickness, she is now in good health, our youngest Emma Frances is the beauty of the place and the best child we have had, she has however suffered much from sickness and somewhat backward in consequence. With so many young children we of course live a very domestic life and I believe as comfortable a one as any Family within my experience. Our circumstances will not allow us to associate with what is called the first or in other words the richest people here, yet whenever we come in contact with them in public places we are treated with the utmost respect. Ever since I have been in this country business has become worse and worse, and money more and more scarce, it is as much [as] I can do with the most persevering attention to business to obtain more *money* than sufficient to pay my expences; I am now living in a House that exactly suits me, situated most pleasantly on a high Bank looking on to the Falls of the Ohio, it was built by the concern in which I am the acting partner and one third owner for my residence, being immediately in the neighbourhood of our steam Saw Mill. If I had the same talent for drawing that I had when you were a child I would sketch it for you. Last year was the first year that I realized more than my expenses, and my prospects next year are I think better, but my sanguine temperament has so often misled me, that I do not depend so much on good prospects as heretofore, should I ever be in positive distress you shall hear,

should I become rich you shall see me in England. I hope my dear Sister that you will ans{wer} this immediately giving me an exact account of your state {of} mind, your occupation, progress in music and reading, what books you like, where you chiefly spend your time and with whom, be assured my dear Fanny that whatever you write will be interesting, and that when I become acquainted with what would be amusing to you, my letters will be more amusing and longer. M^{rs} Keats and the Children send their love. Make my best respects to M^{rs} M^r and Miss Abbey and tell M^r A that I have been hard pushed to make "the ends of the year meet" but that last year my circumstances were bettered, and that my prospects are good.—M^{rs} K has enjoyed good health but I have suffered much in purse as well as pain by sickness.—

I am

My dear Fanny

Your very Affectionate Brother George

February 1824

¹ The last known letter of John Keats to George was written on November 12, 1819 (*Letters*, pp. 440–443, where it is misdated November 19), but the latter visited England in January, 1820. George here refers to some lost letter. Fanny Keats had not written because (like Charles Brown and William Haslam) she believed that George had taken advantage of John in money matters. Though Fanny Brawne (*Letters of F.B.*, pp. 33f.) had defended him as early as May 23, 1821, and though Fanny Keats did write before May, 1824 (see the next letter), it was only in August, 1824, that Mrs. Dilke (see Adami, p. 108) convinced his sister "that George is still and ever will be an honourable man." "I sincerely hate myself," Fanny added, "for having for an instant doubted it." None the less, as the following letters show, she and George continued to have misunderstandings and doubts.

² George's faith in Abbey lasted for two further years. See his letter of March 4, 1826, below.

» 5 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

28 April, May (?) 1824

Address: Miss Keats./ Care of Rich^d Abbey Esq^r./ Pancrass Lane/ London
Brief extracts are printed by F, IV, 399-401.

Louisville, Kentucky, April 28th 1824

My dear Fanny.

'Tis now the early budders are just new
And spread in mazes of the youngest hue
About old Forests"¹

This season never comes round without reminding me of these lines, and many others equally appropriate, and beautiful of our dear John; the Horse chesnut Trees or as they are here called the "Buckeyes" (named I presume from the resemblance of its fruit to the beautiful large dark brown eye of the deer) are now so large in leaf as to tint the woods with green, the orchards which are numerous and extensive are in richest blossom, pink and white, Peaches Apples and Cherries, some blue grass we have sown round the House and along the walks of the Garden is about an inch out of the Ground, and our vegetables are coming forward rapidly, keeping pace with your spring, we are generally about a month earlier. With the exception of the blue bird resembling in shape and habits the robin, we have nothing musical in the feathered tribe to usher in the spring, no blackbird, thrush, linnet Goldfinch, or earliest Cuckoo; our woods ring with the harsh cries of innumerable woodpeckers of gaudy plumage and ungraceful form, but no tender Nightingale sings his melodious song. We sometimes see at an enormous height a flight of Swans, flying in the form of a wedge, after the manner of ducks and Geese; Storks and cranes of very large size frequently fish in the shallow water of the falls within sight of the House, and when hunting in solitary places

I have seen most noble eagles. When in England this season used to elevate my spirits promising pleasant Summer,—but now it is only agreeable in itself promising long sultry days and perhaps sickness, this spring being very backward (promises) is however esteemed favorable to health, you shall hear as the season advances how we get on.²—I wrote the accompanying letter intending to send it, as it expresses by the post, but hearing Mr Briggs³ would soon start for London I have delayed it for that opportunity; had I thought it possible he would have waited so long it should have gone as originally intended. You may fairly accuse me for not writing so frequently as I ought to have done, but I am persuaded you have not received several letters that I have sent, I hope in future that our correspondence will be attended with better fortune, I regret Miss Brawne should have been in the way of your writing to me, that letter had it come to hand would have relieved me from many unpleasant feelings about you. Knowing John's affection for that young Lady I feel very much disposed to like her, altho' I was informed by persons I very much respect⁴ that she was an artful bad hearted Girl, all I saw to object to in her was an appearance of want of affection for her Sister and respect for her Mother. I sincerely hope she is not connected in the change you contemplate "in your present mode of life for one more congenial to your age."⁵ If you have occasion to consult any one on so delicate a step as a change of life, I presume you mean a change of residence, let me recommend Mrs Dilke to you, she has good sense and a large fund of disinterested good nature. Pray my dear Girl write more fully on this subject and do not decide if you can possibly help it without my concurrence. I am fully persuaded from the affectionate manner in which Mr Abbey mentions you that he is deeply interested in your happiness, and knowing him to be a straightforward, candid man, I feel easy while you are under his protection, and hope you will never leave it untill you change your name or live with me. I would not by any means recommend you to remain contented with being miserable any where, but I

know from experience that we can more easily see the disagreeables than the advantages of our present situation, a change might possibly be for the worse. One thing is most positive, do not intrust any one but Mr Abbey with your property,⁶ nor lay yourself under material obligations, or you will soon become the dupe of the designing and crafty, at present this may appear worldly minded advice, but a very few years will show you such behaviour is necessary to a generous spirit always inclined to overpay obligations.—Never fear in future about putting me to the expense of postage, altho' I am not in opulent I am in easy circumstances, and am willing to pay it whenever you have any thing to communicate.—

The Harp is a delightful instrument and depends for its attractions more than any instrument but the violin on the taste and skill of the musician. I sincerely hope you may conquer it and having so powerful a restorative at command you may at pleasure drive away those melancholy fits you are subject to, in fact you must be provided with some elegant accomplishment before we come to England to help to polish your beautiful neices from their Kentucky rust. I am sure Fanny you have not a sallow Complexion, pale but not sallow, air and exercise only are wanting to give you your natural colour. Your face is decidedly not spanish, but English all over.⁷ If I fancied you to resemble Don Quixote I should fancy a handsome intelligent melancholy countenance, with something wild but benevolent about the eyes, a lofty Forehead but not very broad, with finely arched eyebrows denoting candour and generosity. He is an immense favorite of mine and I cannot help feeling angry with the great Cervantes for bringing him into situations where he is the laughing stock of minds so inferior to his own, it is evident he was a great favorite of the author and (that) it is evident he was tinted ⁸ with the chivalric spirit ⁹ he so wittily ridicules; ¹⁰ he is made to speak as much sound sense, elevated morallity and true piety, as any divine who ever wrote; if I were to meet with such a man I should almost hate myself for laughing at his eccentrici-

ties.¹¹—Tell me what Books you read and point out those parts that most forcibly arrest your attention, that I may frame such letters as may prove agreeable; I particularly desire to know if you have carefully read John's works & what impression they made, I will reserve my *opinion, observations* on his various excellencies and defects untill I can understand how far you are interested in the subject.

Mr Briggs will not return untill October therefore I beg you will write by post immediately on receipt of this, remembering it will be necessary to pay the inland postage, he will inform you before he leaves London where to send letters intended for me, I expect to receive a volume since you will have so much time and so sure an opportunity. You will find Mr Briggs a very agreeable man able to give you any information you desire about our situation looks &c. he went to school with me to Mr Clarks Endfield; he dined with us to day and nursed your little neices, who with Mrs Keats desire you to accept their kisses and their love. Mrs K is extremely anxious to see you and I hope the time is not very, very far distant when you will be thoroughl{y} acquainted with each other, I see you have a very high opinion of her, but {I am} persuaded it will improve still more when you become intimately acqu{ainted} with her singleness of heart, generosity, and candour, she is the antipodes of m{e,} to name all her good qualities would be but a vague description, since every person has some claim to all the virtues, but it is the graceful manner with which they are exercised that gives them their great charm. If I had the eloquence of Scott I would make her the heroine of a novel and she would make a good one for she has faults enough to take from her Character all insipidity, she is quick in her temper, overfond of the Children, and occasionally overindulgent to your most affectionate Brother and only natural protector

George Keats.

¹ Slightly misquoted from *Endymion*, I.41-43.

² F omits the long passage from "I wrote the" through "give you your natural

colour." Presumably the letter from "I wrote the" to the end was written sometime in May.

³ See 26n., below.

⁴ Perhaps J. H. Reynolds and his family.

⁵ See p. 69, below.

⁶ Later letters in this series show how Abbey mismanaged it.

⁷ Valentin Llanos was in her mind. She had met him before October 8, 1821 (*Letters of F. B.*, p. 44).

⁸ *F* united.

⁹ *F* spirits.

¹⁰ Or perhaps *redicules* (*F*).

¹¹ *F* ends here.

⇒ 6 ⇐

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

February 1825

Address: Miss. F. M. Keats./ to the care of Rich^d Abbey Esq^r./ Pancrass Lane/ London./ Lord Whitworth.³

Postmarks: A 26 MY 26 1825; LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER

Brief extracts are printed in *F*, IV, 401f.

My dear Fanny

Louisville Feb^y 1825

The knowledge that so many letters sent by post have never arrived, induced me to wait till Mr Briggs was established in New Orleans,² so that, a surer and less expensive communication might be established thro' him, he has however undertaken to go to Mexico, I have resolved not to wait any longer; altho' writing a letter that possibly may not reach its destination is so disheartening a task that it cannot be otherwise than dull, it will however acquaint you that we are all well, and living comfortably, and prosperously. I hope it may arrive safe, and grieve that we who are so peculiarly situated in the world, without relations, and so few Friends should have no other intercourse than a most uncertain correspondence, to continue our knowledge of each other; but for Mr Brigg's punctuallity we might have given each other up for ever. In a few years we may per-

haps be in nearer neighbourhood, either we must come to you, or you must come to us. If I could afford time and expense to bring you here, I would not hesitate to advise you to come and live with me, it is [a] subject of frequent chat between me, and M^{rs} K, but our difficulty is to get you here, and if you should wish to go back to convey you in safety, other young ladies have surmounted those objections perhaps a favorable opportunity may induce you to do the same. For your frequent complaints, colds, sore throats, and our Family consumption this climate is considered and I beleive correctly very favorable, the Atlantic States are much the same as England—M^{rs} K has been confined with her fourth Girl,³ we hoped for a Boy to name him after poor John, who altho' so long gone from us is constantly in our minds; his miniature over our mantel peice is partly hidden by a hyacynth in bloom; Shakespeare is next above him, Tom at the top, Beaumont and Fletcher on either side. Our other less valued pictures are Wellington and Buonaparte between the windows, and the miniature of a dog by H^y Wylie in mezzotinto over one of the doors.—The most lively recollection I have of you relates to times which I expect you have almost forgotten, when we lived with our Grandmother at Edmonton, and John, Tom and myself were always devising plans to amuse you, jealous lest you should prefer either of us to the others, now the scene is changed, you are a woman judging of pictures, giving up the harp because you cannot satisfy your own taste, copying poetry, and moreover forgetting what you learnt at School, all proofs of womanhood incontrovertible, I beg you will pardon if former vivid recollections betray me into writing any fooleries not altogether sufficiently elevated to address to my Sister Fanny at the age of maturity. I am very much gratified to hear that Miss Brawne is an amiable Girl and that eccentricity has deceived my informants into the beleif that she is unworthy, few things could give me more pleasure than to hear that the Lady of my dear Friend and Brother John's choice should be worthy of him. I trust I shall never forget M^{rs} & Miss B.'s devoted attention to him

during his sickness, their kindness to you encreases my debt. When I heard of John's death I reproached myself for having left one so sensitive and hypochondriacal to the bare world, when I perhaps was the only person in it who knew him well enough, who was fitted to releive him of its friction, who was qualified to make things go easy with him. I cannot help thinking that he might now be living if I had remained with him, it is however no little consolation to me and honorable to his Friends that he should have met with so many perseveringly ⁴ disinterested services at every point that he needed them.—I would write something about his works if I had room, I will now only thank you for sending his last volume, his talents have honoured our name, his excellencies are written in our hearts.—What Follows is a part of a letter to M^r Abbey ⁵ that will be forwarded at about the same time as this, please to communicate it to him—

My dear Sir —

When I last wrote to you I had come to the understanding that the notes I had given to Taylor & Hessey thro' Tallant of Cincin^a in liquidation of their claim on John's estate, should be forwarded immediately to T & H and that they should be given up to you on your paying their acc. M^r Tallant not having attended to the business at that time, has since determined that he will not forward them, but requires me to renew them in one note that he may send it on for collection. the laws of this State are such that it would be imprudent to accede to such an arrangement, it would give Tallant a more summary mode of collecting I have so worsted him in some letters that have passed between us, that I {would} rather not trust him with the power to hurt me. Since he will not forw{ard the} original notes you will oblige me by settling Taylor & Hessey's account, and taking their order on Tallant for the *6 notes I gave him in settlement of their account with my Brother*, as well as an indemnification, or some writing to secure me should any accident occur to prevent me from getting the notes, I leave to you to devise the

best plan to obtain that object, I have Tallant's written engagement to give them up to T & H's order. Your letter by Briggs asks for authority to pay Taylor & Hessey 159£—Haslam 50,—Brown 70£ and the Taylor 30£ or 40£—I hereby request you to pay those persons, mindg. to take such receipts as your prudence may deem sufficient. This list amts to more than I supposed was forthcoming, you will oblige me much by informing me when

T & H's

you send the *order* what has been done for the others. Please to forward duplicates one addressed to me via New York, the other to the care of Gordon & Forstall—New Orleans.—and still further deserve the good wishes of Dear Sir

Yours sincerely

Geo Keats.

¹ The name (written with a different pen and perhaps by another hand) of the earl who died on May 13, 1825, aged seventy-two, though why it should be in this address is not clear to me.

² In an 1827 directory he is listed as a merchant and négociant at 23 Toulouse Street, New Orleans (KC I, 283 n.).

³ Isabel: see the next letter.

⁴ *Written* perseveringly.

⁵ See the next letter.

» 7 «

GEORGE KEATS TO RICHARD ABBEY

18 March 1825¹

Address: Rich^d Abbey Esq^{re}/ Pancras Lane/ London

Postmarks: SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL; F 2 JY 2 1825

Rich^d Abbey Esq^{re} }
London

Louisville March 18th 1825

My dear Sir

When I last wrote to you I had come to the understanding that the notes I had given to Taylor & Hessey, thro their agent Ja^s Tallant ²—Cincinnati—in liquidation of their claim on John, should be forwarded immediately to Taylor & Hessey, to be given up to you on your paying their account. Tallant not having attended to the business at that time, has since determined that he will not forward them, but requires me to renew them in one note that he may send it on for collection; such an arrangement would be imprudent, since it would enable Tallant to pursue a more summary mode of collection by law, than is possible under the present circumstances; I have so worsted him in some letters that have passed between us, that I fear he has some resentment, and is prepared to give me some trouble; since he will not forward the original notes I shall be obliged by your settling Taylor & Hessey's account, and taking their order on Tallant for the 6 notes taken from me, in payment of that account, with an indemnification, or some Instrument to secure me, should any accident prevent me from getting the notes; I will leave to you to adopt the best plan to obtain that object, I have Tallant's written engagement to give them up to T & H's order.³

In a former letter I desired you to pay to the full in your hands all claims against John's estate, since however your last per Briggs asks for authority to pay

Taylor & Hessey	159£
Haslam	50£
Brown	70£
and the Taylor	30£ or 40£

I hereby again request you to pay those persons, being careful to take such receipts as your prudence may suggest—This list amounts to more than I supposed was forthcoming, you will oblige me by mentioning when you send Taylor & Hessey's order on Tallant for the notes, what you have been able to do for the others. Please to send duplicates one addressed to me, via New York, the other to the care of Gordon & Forstall New Orleans.⁴—I am sorry you deferred writing until you no longer had time to tell me some London news, Are Hodgkinson, Frith, Parker, Beilby, Wilkinson ⁵ succeeding in the world, John lent the latter 40£ or 50£, perhaps the money Could be got by application.—Give my love to Fanny I will write to her in a few days.

I hope to be able to inform you in July next that our grist Mill mentioned in a former letter is grinding 70 Barrels of Flour per 24 hours, the Saw Mill is doing well and is the main Instrument in enabling us to complete the other, which when finished will be inferior to none in the Western Country: I had need be making something for my fourth Girl was born on the 28th Feb^y,⁶ I must give one of them the education of a Boy.—My best respects to M^{rs} & Miss Abbey and accept for yourself the gratefull thanks of

My dear Sir.

Your sincere well wisher

Geo Keats.

¹ Part of this letter, which presumably Fanny turned over to Abbey, is loosely quoted in that preceding.

² For George's dealings with Taylor and Hessey, his brother's publishers, and James Tallant, see KC I, 214–216.

³ On August 17, 1828, Charles Wylie asked Taylor and Hessey to send his sister, Mrs. George Keats, an order on Tallant "to give up the Bill or Bills now

in his possession drawn by" them on George, "the amount having been paid by M^r Abbey." Tallant refused to return a draft for £150 which Taylor and Hessey had made on George, February 17, 1821, and which George had refused to accept, and eventually it passed into the hands of Charles Brown and Richard Woodhouse (*KC I*, 216, 317).

⁴ Merchants, négociants, 105 Royal Street, New Orleans, in 1824 and 23 Toulouse Street in 1827 (*KC I*, 283 n.).

⁵ All these persons except Parker are mentioned in Fanny Keats's letter of May 31, 1826, to George (*KC I*, 297-300). I have no information about him, Frith, or Beilby. Hodgkinson was Abbey's junior partner whom Keats heartily disliked (*Letters*, pp. 375f., 498). Wilkinson was presumably the lawyer of 13 New North Street, Red Lion Square, to whom Keats presented a copy of his 1817 *Poems* (now in the New York Public Library) inscribed "to C. Wilkinson from the Author."

⁶ The exact date of Isabel's birth has not elsewhere been given. She died on October 29, 1843 (*KC I*, xcvi-c).

>>> 8 <<<

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS

5 June 1825

Address: Miss Keats./ at Rich^d Abbey Esq^r*/ 4 Pancrass Lane/ London

Postmarks: LIVERPOOL SE 1 1825 206; A 3 SE 3 1825

Three sentences are printed in *F*, IV, 407.

Louisville June 5th 1825 ¹

My dear Fanny

It is so short a time since I sent a long letter that you must permit me to plead continual, harrassing occupation as an excuse for the breifness of this: the necessity to overlook the Carpenters, and Millwrights engaged in erecting the Flour Mill, and attending to the Saw Mill now in its busiest season, keeps me constantly on my legs so that when I come home at night I am too much fatigued to write, and we have only till tomorrow night to make up our Packets. I will request M^r Whittingham ² who has resided here as long as we have to call, and see you, and acquaint you where to send letters for him to bring back, he is a worthy, good natured Fellow, but we are not very intimate, he will be able to

tell you how we look—I have written about 14 days since ³ to Mr Dilke who I presume will give me all information about John's works &c, but I should be glad to receive from you any information that may come in your way, I will repeat the request made in my last ⁴ to forward a copy of Shelley's "*Adonais An Elegy on John*" I will write to Mr Dilke a few words. Send a long letter per Whittingham and let it be the picture of your Soul, describe all your actions, occupations, thoughts, vexations, & amusements, beginning with Sunday morning and ending with Saturday night: whenever you feel disposed, write, so that if I am not to see you for many years I may feel one so dear to me exists in a certain palpable character, understanding me and being understood by me, not leave me to think that you are distinguished only as a petticoated human being, tall, and thin, at present I imagine you to resemble poor Tom in Features, Person, and disposition. We are all well Father, Mother, Georgiana Emily, Rosalind, Emma Frances, and Isabel, all but the latter send kisses and love. Mrs K talks of coming to England on a visit, but she must wait untill I can spare the large sum necessary for her to travel in comfort, she wishes much to see you, and I cordially wish we were accessible enough for you to try how you would like to live with us, you could not fail to love her; for she is the very spirit of candour, and generosity, a cheerful companion and persevering Freind thro' good and ill, she has considerable natural talents but is not overburthen'd with accomplishments, and to wind up, *she is a Lady* in the best sense of the word, and yet no Faults, yes a few, she thinks me better and wiser than I am, she is quick in her temper, and has not the talent to keep the children in good discipline leaving all the chastizing to their indolent Father, and interfering when I find chastisement necessary.—Present my respects to Mrs & Miss Brawne, and say I should be most happy to hear from the latter if it is only to give me a description of her present self, and you, when I saw her last I remember a young artist complimented her on her having ⁵ revived [a] ⁶ tasty headdress of the age of

Charles the 2nd. I presume her sister is now a ful{1} blown Beauty. Give my respects to M^r M^{rs} and Miss Abbey. I have written to M^r Abbey⁷ requesting him to settle all accounts against John to the amount of funds in his hands, I here repeat it without particulars that no opportunity may be missed to give such directions.—

Beleive me Your very affectionate Brother
and Friend

Geo Keats.

¹ *The month is changed from May.*

² Perhaps Charles Whittingham who resided on Fifth Street between Market and Jefferson streets.

³ He seems to refer to his letter of April 20 (*KC I*, 283–292).

⁴ Before April 20 (*KC I*, 291). Fanny copied *Adonais* from the *London Literary Chronicle*, December 1, 1822, pp. 751–754, in her letter to George of May 31, 1826 (*KC I*, 297 n.).

⁵ *F* complimented her [on] having.

⁶ *Written to.*

⁷ See the preceding letter.

» 9 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

4 March, 15 April 1826

Address: Miss F. M. Keats/ to the care of Cha^a Dilke Esq^r*/ Navy pay Office/ Sommerset House. *Readdressed by Dilke:* M^{rs} L'lanos/ Boxsted/ Downshire Hill/ Hampstead¹

Postmark: 10 F NOON 10 3 AU 1826; TP Pimlico

Louisville March 4th 1826

My dear Fanny

I am sorry my unlimited confidence in M^r Abbey should in any measure lead to your present difficulties with him, of which I had not received the slightest hint untill the arrival of Dilke's exposée of a twelvemonth's urgings and evasions. Indeed my dear Sister you must consider me widely estranged from you when you battle twelve months in difficulties which I of all

others may be supposed to be best acquainted with—you do not ask either advice or sympathy. I have no jealousy of those you have consulted who are men of sense and honor—I should have recommended them and have entreated their advice and assistance, still I may fairly feel hurt that you did not think it worth while to communicate with me from the beginning: It is possible that you are but slightly attached to me, remembering little of the time when you were my pet, that you do not recollect enough of me to love me, being but young when we were much together—The few lines I have received from you at distant intervals obliterated these ideas that have occasionally beset me but your silence on this important occasion makes me feel myself forgotten. Whatever may be your feelings now, I am sure the time will come when you will think me your best Friend—I will however hope that you *have* written, that your letters have miscarried, that at the same time that you had the spirit to demand a settlement with Mr Abbey you wrote to acquaint me with his probable dishonesty; thro' my ignorance of his circumstances and the extent of my claim on the court of Chancery I have risked and I fear lost all by giving him my power of attorney to act for me.² I have written to Mr Dilke on this subject and appointed Rice & Reynolds to act for me professionally—Yes I am so anxious to remove all blame from you that I will believe you have thought of me altho' from causes beyond your controul I have failed to receive evidence of it.—

Mr Abbey's account of your property of which Mr Dilke has furnished me a Copy, is evidently a rough draft from his memory to say the best of it, his ingenuity has discovered errors that I with my present means of examination should have passed unnoticed altho' when pointed out appear to me in the same light as they do to him. I have no doubt I could ferret out the exact truth if I were in London and would come if I thought all could be obtained by merely ascertaining what is due, but to know our rights under the present circumstances is but a small advance towards obtaining them, in doing which I do not see wherein I

should be more effective than your present active Friends. My business is so extensive and so entirely depends on my superintendence for its successful carrying on, that nothing short of a certainty that my coming would be extensively useful to you or to myself would induce me to injure myself so considerably as to leave it. I feel that if my health is good that I cannot fail by close attention to realise an independance, having bought on good terms and an accomodating credit the whole of the Mills but one tenth, which I hope to obtain in a few weeks. Should the business continue as productive as it is at present which I have every reason to beleive will be the case, I shall be out of debt in 2 years and own unincumbered property, the rents of which would support my Family without any exertion on my part. Mr Dilke says you are well and that you will inform me fully about your disgust at the usage you have met with at Abbey's. I am anxiously looking out for letters and hope to receive answers to the many letters I have formerly sent.—Are you acquainted with Reynolds sisters married & single? what sort of women are they now? they were favorites of mine—particularly Marian, is she the one Married? ³ Are you intimate with Miss Brawne? what is her present character? What other Friends have you?—Give me some account of yourself—I fear you are moping and melancholic or you would have found your cheerful Brother more attractive. Mrs K and myself frequently talk about you, imagining plans to bring you out and what sort of Life you could lead with us, if I could point out any feasible way of transportation I would urge you to come and spend a year, a few years, or a life with us as you please, should your wishes point the same way you may possibly find out some respectable emigrating Family who would give you the necessary protection. Should this business with Mr Abbey draw me to London and my circumstances at the same time will permit I shall bring Mrs K with me whose liveliness will charm you to return with us. I don't like this boarding out,⁴ in most cases it generates bad feelings; you pay for what you have and do not feel thankful for

good entertainment, you feel dissatisfied when badly attended to, they bear with your Company whether disagreeable or otherwise for the sake of your Cash, and feel your presence as intrusion at times when under other circumstances they would be glad to see you. This way of living is destructive of the kindly feelings, it does not exercise them, they become palsied from inactivity—my not uncomfortable House should be your Home, you have no connections or Friends but such as the eminent talents of Poor John raised to you, and which respect to his memory continue to you, therefore my House is your Home. Do you ever laugh I have not seen you so undignified since you were not bigger than your neice Georgiana, I cannot help thinking you are uncommonly serious. Mirthful or serious I will ask the question—have you reached twenty two without an entanglement, without a wish to change your name to operate against a visit to this far countree—speak plainly I am your Father bald at all times, serious on important occasions and withall 29 years old on the 1st of March last.⁵ Tell me I say joking apart if you are free heart and hand, that I may not calculate on building with preengaged materials.

By the time this arrives you will have got all your property out of the Hands of M^r Abbey, or at least have ascertained the amount you are likely to get; write to me by return of M^r Turner ⁶ or should he by any chance not communicate with you, by post soon after the receipt of this, all about it, as well as what you can learn about my prospects concerning the Chancery Money.

April 15th 1826—Since writing the foregoing with the view of filling up when M^r Turner had resolved when to start, we have suffered the agony of attending the sick bed, and eventually the death bed, of our dear Rosalind, our second born.⁷ I presume that like all other People we shall in a short time become reconciled to our loss, altho' we think there was something *peculiar* in our child, to leave a more decided, a deeper impression on the memory than most children of her age, even than her elder

sister Georgiana. She had suffered so much sickness, had been so much indulged by us, she had no pleasure out of our society, she calculated with expectation of pleasure on my being at home at meal time, met me at the door and repayed all the *immense* trouble she imposed on us by an evident strength of affection that is unfelt by most children, and I think by our others. She was exquisitely beautiful, and the admiration of the whole town, whose sympathy justifies us in our opinion of her. I built much on her affectionate disposition being a Family link to hold her more volatile sisters together in bond of amity when we are no longer with them or when we are too old to influence their affections. She is however gone with all her charms real or imaginary, and our sorrow should be and perhaps is mitigated by the knowledge that her tender constitution would not in all probability have lasted to maturity, that we must have lost her at some future time when she will have engrafted herself still more firmly in our hearts, and moreover that her indulged, tender, reserved disposition was not calculated to make her happy in nine tenths of the situations that fall to the lot of mortals.—All left of us are Well, M^{rs} K—Georgiana, and Emma send their love. Isabel was one year old on the first of March; she has only four teeth and can neither walk nor talk.—

My best rem^s to the Dilke's & the Reynolds'es,
who am

Your affectionate Brother
George Keats.

¹ An address not before associated with the Llanoses, who were married on March 30.

² See *KC* I, 298, 300f., and p. 39, below.

³ Eliza Reynolds married George Longmore in 1822; Jane, Thomas Hood in 1825. Marian (e) married H. G. Green later on—sometime before 1833.

⁴ She had been living with a Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, Beaufort Row, Chelsea (Adami, p. 123). Probably she moved from the Abbess' still earlier, for Gerald Griffin (*The Life of Gerald Griffin. By His Brother* [Dublin, n.d.], p. 146) wrote to his sister on June 21, 1825: "I think it probable I may some of these days become acquainted with the young sister of poor Keats the poet, as she is coming to spend some time with a friend of mine."

^a George was born on February 28, 1797. He and his family seem to have thought March 1 his birthday, and his original tombstone in Western Cemetery, Louisville (see the *Louisville Commercial*, November 2, 1860, and *KC I*, civ n.), bore the date March 1, 1798. (Other writers, like J. A. Piatt, as quoted in *Every Saturday*, December 30, 1871, p. 635, and F. J. Koch, in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXIII [1924], 163f., give the date as March 1, 1778.)

^b On Turner, see *KC I*, 300f.

^c Born December 18, 1821 (see p. 15, above). She died 3 April 1826.

→ 10 ←

L. MANNING TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

9 April 1826

Address: M^r Llanos/ 4 Michael's Grove/ Brompton ¹

Postmark: 4 EVEN 4 10 AP 1826

Walthamstow

April 9th

My dear Fanny/

Quite unexpectedly I received directions from home on Sunday ² last to set off for England on the following Morning which annoyed me exceedingly—I arrived in London at ½ past eight on Wednesday evening and leave for Ireland tomorrow morning at an early hour ³ I have been staying with the Marchioness of Ormonde ⁴ at the Burlington Hotel and yesterday the *first leisure time* I had I endeavoured to see you—I had great difficulty in finding you and after all was disappointed—I congratulate you on your change of name and state may it prove a happiness to you is the sincere wish of your affectionate friend—When I heard it was a Spaniard you were married to I concluded it ⁵ was the Gentleman I once saw at M^r Dilke's but on an interview with the Gentleman I soon ⁶ perceived my mistake—I was before afraid you had tied yourself to old age What I have *seen* of your husband I like your choice and I hope in every respect you may have cause to rejoice in it—I suppose

you have of late had so much on your mind that you could not devote your time to an absent friend but I forgive you as I know little or nothing of the anxiety love occasions previous to matrimony and it may be *excessive*—I shall expect to hear from you when I reach home which will be in a week and write to me when you get to the Continent you know my address—With Comp^{ts} to M^r Llanos I remain

My dear Fanny

Your Sincere and Affectionate Friend

L Manning⁷

PS I do not know how to spell your name excuse all imperfections for I am in great haste

Yours ever

LM

¹ A previously unrecorded address for the Llanoses.

² April 2.

³ If she did so, this letter was posted after she left London.

⁴ Louisa Grace, daughter (died 1860) of John Staples, wife of James Butler (1774–1838), who was created fifth marquess on October 5, 1825.

⁵ Written in it.

⁶ Followed by a period.

⁷ A woman friend not mentioned by any writer on the Keatses.

» I I «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

23 May 1827

Address: M^r Goodacre/ 72 St Pauls Church Yard/ M^{rs} Llanos (care of) /
Chancery Lane/ Navy Pay Office/ Somerset House/ London

My very dear Sister

Louisville }
Kentucky } May 23rd 1827

A M^r Goodacre¹ who has been lecturing in every principal city in the Union on astronomy will be here in a few minutes to dine with us, & will start immediately after dinner for England direct, on learning which I directly set down to

inform you of my existence. I have not had any conversation with him since he left this place four months since, therefore do not know if it will be convenient for him to seek you out, and give you some idea by word of mouth of our looks and manner of living, should he call, please to extend to him every politeness in your pow{er.} I have been sorely disappointed at not hearing from you so long, particularly as I had promised myself on receiving your last a very frequent intercourse; you surrounded by numerous friends may not feel the solitude of living with affections shut up and confined within the narrow boundaries of a family circle; but for the stimulating occupation of business I should become a misanthrope out side of my own doors, I therefore desire, ardently desire a continued intercourse with one who engaged my fraternal affections at a time when she did not know, was not alive to the value of such affections The friendliness and kindly feeling which you have taught me to feel for M^r Llanos should not be chilled by so cold a silence, if in his intercourse with me, he may not meet with cultivated intellect, he may depend upon kind, hearty brotherly Friendship that circumstances cannot alter. Convey to him my best regards. I have read his freemason² and felt warmed by its liberallity and noble feeling, may that and all his other productions succeed with the world to the utmost of his wishes, all I would ask, would be that they be fairly appreciated. I am anxiously looking for M^r Turner³ expecting letters by him since so long a period since his arrival in England has passed without hearing from you by the post, he is expected in June, if he does not bring letters I despair hearing from you any more. Not knowing your address I am constrained to trouble M^r Dilke with this, convey to him my thanks for his many kindnesses, which have proved as valuable to me, as they have been costly to him in time and patience. My warmest rem^s to M^{rs} Dilke. After Turner's arrival whether he bring letters or not I will write to all—I have not yet heard from

Rice & Reynolds to whom I have addressed several letters, and fear much they have not come to hand, or their answers are miscarried—circumstances made it possible they might have remitted me some money, so that it is material that I should be made acquainted soon if they have received my Power of Attorney &c,⁴ or if indeed there is such a Firm as Rice & Reynolds to which address my communications have been sent. I feel ashamed of urging so frequently my wish to hear about the progress of M^r Abbey's affairs, I cannot help hoping for something from that quarter, or allowing such hopes to influence⁵ my arrangements in a manner that I fear will bring upon me some trouble. All that I have heard of the business was from M^r Dilke whose last letter was dated 28th July 1826.

Let me hear from you very soon, and endeavour to give me some idea of the manner in which you live, with whom and what sort of people you chiefly associate, I sincerely hope M^{rs} K and myself will one day form part of the Friendly circle—She desires her love to you—Our three Girls are pretty well in health, altho all of us have suffered some sickness this winter. Beleive me My dear Fanny

Your affectionate Brother

Geo Keats

¹ Compare *Outline of Eight Lectures on Astronomy, and of an Introductory Lecture*, an announcement of lectures Robert Goodacre gave at Washington Hall, New York, in May and June, 1825. His *Arithmetic* (1803) reached a ninth edition in 1839. The signature and the St. Paul's address are probably in his hand.

² That is *Sandoval* (see p. 52, below).

³ See p. 34, above.

⁴ Sent before October 18, 1826 (*KC I*, 301).

⁵ *Changed from from influencing.*

» 12 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

25 March 1828

*Address: W W at Messrs Gattie and Peirce's/ 57 New Bond Street¹*Louisville March 25th 1828.

My dear Sister.

It is now nearly two years since I heard from you,² in which time I have written thrice—I will not trouble you with my inferences—It was my intention to have waited the departure of a Gentleman who is going to London before I dispatch'd another letter, this is now sent in consequence of an event mentioned below, and I expect M^{rs} Keats will deliver the next herself, her visit to London being hastened by the necessity that I should have some one there to settle my business. She would not otherwise have gone untill 1829 when I might possibly have accompanied her.

Mr Rice wrote to me on the 5th April 1827 stating that such and such sums were forthcoming requiring powers &c to collect them amounting to upwards of £500 and asking in what way he should remit the money, I drew for 350£ at 90 days sight, he accepted the dft but failed to pay it when at maturity and it is now here to be taken up by me swelled in amount 20 per Cent besides expences. His change of residence coupled with this failure to pay an accepted dft looks very like bankruptcy, I sincerely hope for his & Reynolds sake as well as mine that this is not the case, but it looks like it, and should it be so, and should you have been acquainted with it, knowing that I employed them, I shall feel very sorely your neglect in not writing to me. Indeed you should have written at all events.—The apparently dangerous situation of my affairs therefore makes it necessary that I should be in London, since however my business here renders such an absence almost impossible I shall have to depend on

what M^{rs} Keats can do. M^r Rice has given me a statement of my account with you & M^r Llanos wherein it appears that you fall in my debt £7.18.7 money, and £341.11.9 Stock, and that you held a mortgage on property of M^r Abbey's (to the) in which I am interested to the amount of £267.12.0. If you have not paid over to Rice the above, or have any left unpaid, please to consult Dilke before you do pay it, who will know the situation of M^r Rice.³ You will much oblige me by writing immediately as well about this affair as yourself, and M^r Llanos, & child. I will write again by M^{rs} K or the Gentleman spoken of.

My respects to M^r Llanos and love to the little Black eyed Llanos, you see I *hear of* you altho' not *from* you — and am

Your affectionate Brother

Geo Keats.

Not knowing your address I shall enclose this to M^r H^v Wylie, my surmises about R & R'. insolvency may be incorrect, therefore it will be evident to you that nothing should be spread about it, that purely originates in those surmises.

Geo Keats.

¹ Gattie and Peirce were perfumers and comb-makers. The address is not in George's hand. I cannot explain "W W" unless it is an error (see the postscript) for "H. W." or refers to some other Wylie.

² Presumably since her letter of May 31, 1826, announcing her marriage (KC I, 297-300).

³ For a letter on these details that George wrote to Dilke also on March 25 see KC I, 310-312.

»» 13 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS¹

June (?) 1828

My dear Sister/ It is with much pleasure I address you "*my dear Sister*," under the assurance that such expression of my affection for you will be received by you with joy and satisfaction; for 2 years or more so far from feeling that confidence

I doubted if my letters would be received with common welcome. After so long an absence of letters from you I became puzzled to find excuses for your apparent neglect, and must acknowledge that I had settled into the beleif ² that you were careless of my correspondence, and that I had lost my Sister. I had fears of a different nature which I bury with a disbeleif of the existence of what I feared. I am glad that I desired M^r Wylie to call on you, for it will be the means of assuring M^{rs} Keats that she will be welcome to your hearth, who started from home doubting the cordiality of her reception. She is the bearer of a letter to you.—She is now with you,³ you are beginning to know her, I hope before you part, you will form a good opinion of each other, and that your meeting will be the means of forming a secure foundation for a lasting correspondence, co-equal with our lives, in whatever quarter of the world we may live. You advise me to come and reside in England, I do not want the inclination, but at present the change would be impossible. The letter I addressed to you on the 25th March ⁴ should have been written to M^r Llanos had I known he was not averse to my correspondence. — You write now with the confidence of a woman, there is not that restraint on your pen there was formerly, I should very much like to be acquainted with your present self—George ⁵ must watch you closely and paint you to me with the faithfulness of a flemish artist, she has a talent that way, and is not very apt to leave in the back ground what there may be in the picture that is ridiculous. You must not fail to tell me every particle of what you think of her, I can bear to hear anything. You call me such “a considerate, good natured fellow,” look you then now, are you not confident?—I am not a good natured fellow, I used to be so both in fact and appearance, but now I am less so in fact, and if I may judge from the almost universal fear (or something like it) that People have of me, less so in appearance. I am enveloped in an atmosphere (of) whether of pride, or reserve, or ill nature or all or neither, that keeps People at a distance. M^{rs} Keats indeed has no fear of

me, she dares do any thing to the non descript, even to the endeavouring to tell as near as may be what I am. Present my best wishes to M^r Llanos and say I will write to him as soon as I can learn the particulars about the wine and brandy trade.—I am much pleased that he considers himself one of the family, and it shall not be either the fault of my will or negligence if he becomes dissatisfied with me—I will explain to him the reasons why I cannot think of changing my residence at present. You say you have been to the continent,⁶ to what part of it? and what sojourn did you make? tell me all about it. Welcome with a kiss, not “a thousand,” my neice Irené to my relationship, of whose dark eyes I long since heard thro’ M^r H^y Wylie—Tell me what you think of Georgiana⁷—Her eyes are of the first water, the upper part of her Face good; but the lower part requires to be in repose; I hope her journey and residence among you will improve her manners. Kiss our only light eyed one, our boy John, “John Keats” I wish he had as much of poor John in his face as Georgiana has.⁸ Beleive me my very dear Fanny

Your most affectionate Brother George.

¹ An oblong slip probably cut off a letter (perhaps that following) to some other correspondent.

² Written befeif. In the next sentence, too, he originally wrote disbefeif.

³ She sailed for New York around May 12 (KC I, 313).

⁴ The preceding letter.

⁵ His wife Georgiana.

⁶ They went to Paris in August, 1826. Adami (p. 125) thinks they remained there till about September, 1828; but the letters herewith printed show that they were back at Wentworth Place, Hampstead, at least by June, 1828.

⁷ His daughter.

⁸ Emma Keats (Mrs. Philip) Speed wrote to Fanny Llanos on April 1, 1863, that John was “an eccentric unbalanced genius [who] wanders we know not whither.” In his later years he was surveyor and bridge commissioner of De Kalb County, Missouri. See Rollins, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, IV (1950), 244f., 247. He lived until 1917.

»» 14 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO VALENTIN LLANOS

10, 11 July 1828

Address: M^r V. Llanos./ Wentworth Place/ Downshire Hill/ Hampstead
near/ London. [*At the left in another hand:*] Deu/ Devonshire Hill

Postmarks: 7 NIGHT 7 4 SP 1828; TP BgeSt Lambth

My dear Sir

Louisville July 10th 1828.

It was with great pleasure that I received your's and my sister's wedded letters, which were not the less acceptable from being altogether unexpected. I will not conceal from you that I considered myself forgotten by my Sister, and entirely lost sight of by you; the possibility of miscarriage of letters was the staff on which I leaned, but latterly that staff failed me, and hope almost expired. At the very extremity however your letters have started into life not only a healthy hope, but a certainty that a pleasureable intercourse will be kept up between us; I doubt not to our mutual gratification, certainly to mine. Immediately on the receipt of your's I wrote to my Sister in a letter to M^{rs} Keats of the 1st July.—¹

Altho' only 21 when I left England my character, manners, and habits were so completely formed, that my long residence in this country has failed to wean my mind from English associations as the most agreeable, or to give it that American tone which seems to have become engrafted on that of all my countrymen, who have been so long and so early exposed to the effects of the circumstances and opinions that here surround them. I feel myself an *Englishman*, and am looked upon as obstinately *such*, enjoying the respect of my neighbours and acquaintances, but unable to mix with them intimately, familiarly or unreservedly, whether the fault is in me or them, or both of us or neither, they seem as conscious as I am of our unamalgamating qualities and are likely to leave me in possession of my unpopular identity. I perhaps flatter myself in supposing that I am more

free from national prejudices than most men, what few I am stained withal are those of an Englishman which are here of all others the most unpardonable that a man can cherish. Under these circumstances it is not likely that my residence in this country is [a] matter of choice as it regards all sociable relations, and whenever my circumstances are so flourishing as to raise me above the fear of wanting the means to live respectably and liberally without the necessity of exercising a too pinching economy, I will certainly change my dwelling place, and seek

social

a more congenial people amongst whom to cherish my sociable virtues. At present however I am bound by my business and property to remain where I am, keeping in view a future change, and having an intention to sell whenever I can obtain a fair price. M^r Keats will inform you in what manner we live, surrounded by (plenty of) numerous negroo servants² and superfluous plenty; maintaining a general outline of economy that will insure our expences to be within our income, but careless of those trifling expenditures that surrounded by circumstances attending a dense population would be matters of serious consideration. Our servants impose upon us without fretting us, and we with a profusion quite congenial, scatter our dollars without sighing at their disappearance. I think an english education more favorable to the morals as well as health of our children, but that they will have better prospects of living an easy after life in this country. I will take another opportunity to discuss the feasibility of living in England, as well as several other topics that my mind now presents to me, when I have leisure, and am not bound as now to time: this is a very busy season and I am almost bewildered with over occupation. More information about the wine and Brandy trade will be forwarded to you by a friend of mine in Phl^a to whom I will write on the subject, below you will find what particulars I could gather here, where both articles are now very dull. The last congress reduced the wine duties considerably. I will request Drury³ to explain the consequences of the change.

Be assured that your proffer of Friendship is to me matter of much joy, and that I have great pleasure in subscribing myself your Friend & Brother

Geo Keats.

Convey to Miss Brawne my kind regards, and let Irené know as soon as her intellect can comprehend that she has a loving uncle George. Kiss her little Spanish Face, acting as my proxy.
G. K.

The par value of a dollar is \$4. ⁴⁶ St^s present exchange 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ per Cent in favor of London, there are 100 Cents to the dollar—Duty on spirits distilled from other materials than grain. 1st and 2nd proof 38 Cents per Gallon 3rd proof, 42 Cents and 4th proof 48 Cents 5th proof, 57 Cents per Gallon.—Duty on Wines. Madeira, Burgundy, Rhenish, Champagne, Tokay 100 Cents per Gallon . . . [He then gives nearly a page of further details about the prices of brandy, Rochelle, Bordeaux, Malaga, port, and the like in gallons, casks, bottles, or pipes. Among "Sales in New York. 28 June." one observes twenty dozen of "Champagne," which brought from \$7 to \$9 per dozen. Then follows a postscript.]

July 11th ⁴ 1828

I have this morning received yours of the 23rd May as well as a letter from Dilke,⁵ and one from Henry Wylie—I am obliged to you for your punctuallity, and will leave M^{rs} Keats⁶ to thank you in a suitable manner. I once more subscribe myself

Your Friend and Brother

Geo Keats.

¹ Possibly the oblong slip-letter preceding, although in it he says that his wife "is the bearer of a letter" to Fanny Llanos.

² He had four domestic slaves at the time of his death.

³ Michael Drury, a Philadelphia merchant and a cousin of John Taylor's (*KC I*, 100–102, 217–220).

⁴ Changed from 12th.

⁵ To which George replied on July 12 (*KC I*, 315–317).

⁶ Who was then in England.

» 15 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

12 July 1828

Address: M^r Llanos/ Wentworth Place/ Hampstead/ London*Postmarks:* 7 NIGHT 7 4 SP 1828; TP BgeSt LambthLouisville July 12th 1828

My very dear Sister

You have already found out that I am not the considerate, good natured fellow¹ you took me for; listen my good Sister, and fix your opinion of me midway between the one formerly entertained, and the present one recently expressed.—

Politely endeavouring to forstall all argument you tell me you “know what I would say” and stifle my reasonable explanation by an embrace to which finalé I hope however to be conducted at last, but first hear me, harken to my tale, for Oh, woman, woman what precious justification are you willing to leave unheard or unattended to that you may have the last word; or were you hurt enough by my apparent censure to fear that the act of probing the wound would encrease its irritation. Now I have pen, ink paper, and Solitude, so you may raise your voice to the top of its compass, or modulate it to its most entreating tones, without stopping one syllable of my say. However much I covet your forgiveness for having cherished suspicions of your kindly feelings towards me, I do not desire to be sheltered under the skreen “of irritated feelings produced by disappointment” which you have kindly spread before me. I disclaim irritated feelings, and present as my excuse the having acted correctly and justifiable according to my knowledge and the means I had of judging; my feelings were wounded, mortified, but not irritated. When I was under the impression from most reasonable deductions that R & R² were bankrupt, and was assured that that misfortune could not have befallen them

without your knowledge, it necessarily appeared to me that you knowing that they were acting for me having in fact paid money to them for my benefit, that you I say of all others was the person to apprise me of my danger. Your not having answered my urgent letters for so long a time confirmed my opinion of your carelessness about me and my Interests, and I pray you my dear Flesh and blood Sister place yourself for an instant in my situation and think in what manner you would have acted. I feared that I had lost a considerable sum of money which had recently been snatched from a wreck, from the want of a little piloting that should have been performed by you. It all amounts to this, that had my suppositions been true, and Dilke says I had strong grounds for my belief, my complaint (if I made any) (was just) would have been just: as however my surmises were groundless I have the most intense pleasure in receiving into my "heart of hearts" ³ a loving Sister, and confessing myself precipitate and in error when I imputed to her (as I confess I did whatever my letters expressed) want of affection for me and coldness for my interests. So as you say "let us embrace and think no more of the ugly letter" which I am sorry "has cost you so much anxiety"; the cost however has not been altogether mispent, since it has procured for me farther assurance that you have a warm feeling of affection towards one who has so long been forced by appearances to doubt it. I did not intend to accuse Dilke of carelessness to my Interests, he kindly conducted our affairs to a resting place, and then gave them up to the professional guidance of R. & R. His name was inserted in my last power of attorney by mistake, but I had no idea that my interests were under his superintendence, Whatever expressions I may have used in the course of explaining my feelings or situation, whatever signification they may be supposed to bear were decidedly never intended by me to reflect on the conduct of my good and kind Friend Dilke, I flatter myself he does not think so himself. To have applied to him at ⁴ all on the subject is evidence that I did not think him careless of my Interests, by

he had already done enough to satisfy his friendliness—I hope this disagreeable construction has been confined to my sensitive Sister, and if it has spread further I depend on her Zeal for my good name to remove the false impression. Since I shall hear from you and your Sister George ⁵ so soon I will not dwell on your different capacities for loving and pleasing each other, I do most ardently desire that you may prove congenial spirits and that time has in store for you many years of pleasurable communication: I retain you as my counsel to argue against her too long stay in England, I fear you will make it too agreeable to her, her poor home will lose its attractions in comparison.

Having a multiplicity of Mill business to attend to and only short evenings to write, and even those only occasionally, and many letters to make up before the starting of M^r John Bull ⁶ I am obliged to stop with requesting you to pay more than common politeness, civilities to him, whose name if he were otherwise without recommendation should be a passport to your good offices. He is a plain straightforward, worthy, uneducated, sagacious, slow minded, spirited, brave native born Kentuckian, bred a builder. He was once my travelling companion under circumstances that bring out the inside of a mans heart, and we were mutually informed thereby of each others composition, We do not associate much, not being fitted for companions, but good feeling towards each other is current to a very considerable extent, he is now engaged extensively in the Staffordshire ware Business. I am persuaded he would do much to serve me. I hope that M^{rs} K will return under his protection, than whom I would not de{sire} a better guardian. Punning is his Antipodes, and yet he laughed when I trans{fixed} him with one. The Steam Boat in which we travelled was detained by ice about half way up the Mississippi, and we went out a gunning; after we were tired out with unsuccess, we desired to strike straightway for our boat, in our course we got entangled in a cane break, so high and (almost) so nearly impenetrable that we almost despaired of getting out of it; we were confident of our direction but the thickets ⁷ almost made our progress in the right course

impossible; I mounted a tree about 25 or 30 Feet to look out and distinguished a somewhat less obstructed way; again we came to a stand from the same causes as before; when it was Bull's turn to climb which did not prove to him so easy as it had done to me, for he lost his wind, and for a time could neither ascend or descend, while he was in momentary fear of falling it struck me what an odd thing it was to see a Bull up in a tree, which he looked as much like as any thing else thro' the mass of foliage, when in the very midst of his trouble I cried out to him that I had heard of Bears climbing trees but I never expected to see a Bull at such an altitude. He reserved his laugh untill a short residence on terra firma had restored his breath: this was good nature. I am glad you are at Wentworth place—I can realise the scene that surrounds you, I can see you walking about the garden, feeling a satisfaction that your jeruselems and peas, and Pinks and roses are more flourishing or productive or beautiful than your friend & neighbour M^{rs} B.—present my respects to that Family, I remember the ripe as well as the growing beauty,⁸ and poor Sam—⁹ I remember the chairs and the curtains and the cats, and the twelv(e)th cake.—I desire much to hear about Miss Brawne.—Convey to M^r Llanos assurances of my desire of becoming respected and beloved by him—and on your part beleive me

My very dear Fanny

Your most affectionate Brother
Geo. Keats

¹ See p. 42, above.

² Rice and Reynolds.

³ See *Hamlet*, III. ii. 78.

⁴ Written at at.

⁵ Mrs. George Keats.

⁶ John P. Bull, a Louisville merchant, of Bull, Rankin, and Leight, wholesalers, 18 East Main Street, who also (*KC* I, 316n.) carried George's letter of July 12 to Dilke.

⁷ Written thicknets.

⁸ Fanny and Margaret Brawne.

⁹ Who died on March 28, 1828.

» 16 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

5 March 1829

Address: M^{rs} Llanos/ Wentworth Place/ Downshire Hill/ Hampstead

Postmarks: 12 NOON 12 23 MY 1829; 4 EVEN 4 MY 23 1829; TP Charing Cross

My dear Sister

Louisville March 5th 1829

M^r Briggs,¹ who called on you some years ago at my request, will be the bearer of this, either to your hand or to the two penny post. His stay here will be so short that I have not time to write at the length I should wish particularly as I have to write to so many, all of which must be done by ten o'clock to morrow morning.—M^{rs} Keats arrived at New York after a passage of 33 days, I was on the beach ready to receive her, and was happy to see her and the children look so well, they are certainly improved by the journey. We find home most particularly comfortable after so much travelling, and so long, and I believe on both sides so painful a separation. She is very much pleased with her visit, and altho' it has been very costly to me both in feeling and purse, I am glad it is accomplished, and I do not think the money badly expended. The main drawback to my satisfaction is that circumstances prevented you from becoming so well acquainted with her as might reasonably have been expected. M^r Llanos in his letter seems likewise to have regretted it. Whatever may have been the cause, I am quite sure that if ever you do become acquainted with her intimately, you will grieve that you have allowed this opportunity to pass unimproved. If I should be as successful in business in the three succeeding years as I have been in 1828, I shall pay you a visit in 1832, and if our family is so situated as to permit it, M^{rs} K will accompany me; affording another opportunity to cement a relationship by Friendship, that may prove serviceable to one or both in future and be a source of present satisfaction and en-

joyment. I am happy to hear that you are so comfortably situated at Wentworth place, and that my little neice Irene is so pretty and so engaging: Georgiana used to be both, but she is now at "the awkward age," when few children are either the one or the other. I put a letter into the Post office New York (acqu) for M^r C. Llanos ² informing him where to find me in that City, but I did not hear from him. I am much pleased with M^r Llanos present of his works which I have placed by the side of John's on my favorite shelf. For the honor of human nature I hope the scenes of perfidy exhibited in them are exaggerated, altho' the manner in which they are related makes them appear so real. I had read Sandoval in the American edition.³ When I have more time I will enlarge on this subject. I will write to M^r Llanos by a Gentleman from Bristol ⁴ who will pass thro' this place on his way home in a month or two: present to him my thanks and best wishes.

You have not given me any account of your visit to the continent, where did you go? what did you see?

M^{rs} K says you are a female edition of Tom,⁵ I have a good sketch of him over my mantle and can easily realise your looks—I am in looks about 20 years older than the likeness Severn painted of me in 1817.⁶ I can perfectly understand M^r L's looks and manners from {the} description as well as those of Miss Margaret Braw{ne} assisted by what I remember of her when I was in England in 1820. M^{rs} Reynolds, Marianne Reynolds and M^{rs} Dilke sent me very kind letters which has operated with other feelings (considerably) to make me long for a visit to my native land; I shall certainly come when I can spare the funds without inconvenience. M^r Briggs will let you know when he intends to return that you may send letters, which opportunity I beg you will take advantage of to write to your Affectionate Brother

Geo Keats.

¹ See KC I, 281, 283, 319f., and pp. 22f., above.

² See pp. 55f., below.

* *Sandoval; Or, The Freemason* (2 vols., E. Bliss and E. White, Collins and Hannay, and others, New York, 1826).

† A Mr. Hartford (see *KC* I, 319, 332).

‡ Dilke, annotating R. M. Milnes's 1848 biography of Keats, says of Tom: "He was very like M^{rs} Llanos—so like that John spoke of it as most painful to him." See also *Letters*, p. 530.

* Severn's miniature of George, now in the Keats-Shelley House, Rome. It is reproduced in M. B. Forman's *Hampstead Edition of Keats* (New York, 1938), I, lxxvi.

→ 17 ←

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS AND
VALENTIN LLANOS

15 November 1829

Address: M^r V. Llanos/ Wentworth Place/ Hampstead near/ London/
England/ via New York

Postmarks: LOUIS KY NOV 17; TP Rate 2; PAID; F 2 JA 2 1830; 10
NOON 10 JA 2 1830; *SHIP LETTER* LIVERPOOL

Louisville¹ Nov 15th 1829

My dear Fanny.

I congratulate you on bringing into the world my fair nephew Luis Mariano Llanos,² and am most happy in his acquaintance, long may he live and be a comfort and an honour to his Parents, we have within a few days been informed that M^{rs} Cha^s Wylie³ has a boy and named him Geo Keats. In three mos I hope to be entitled to be congratulated on the birth (I hope) of another boy. Altho it is my present intention to visit England I fear if you leave for Valladolid early in the summer, I shall be too late to see you, and if I fail to see you before you go it is probable I never shall. I would not on my own account have you to leave England, the only land besides Nth America that I ever expect to visit, still I can offer no sufficient reason why you should not go wherever M^r Llanos' interest requires. The natural habit of making comparisons between our present in-

conveniences and enjoyments, (and) making what we have been accustomed to, the standard of excellence is the greatest preventive of a disireable state of mind to enjoy happiness in a foreign land: my experience teaches that the educated in all civilized countries are nearly equally sensible and happy, misfortunes arising from war and misgovernment excepted; manners and customs arise principally from climate, we shall therefore find for the most part that however we may dislike them at first, that our own experience will eventually persuade us of their appropriateness. It is likely that on reading this you will laugh at your wise Brother, I hope it will not (be) take *more than ten years* foreign residence to enable you to act up to my ideas, if you do in five your Husband will have sufficient cause to fall down on his Spanish knees and worship his English Nonpareil. I hope for M^r Llanos sake that the holy Ferdinand ⁴ is better advised than formerly, the portraits he has drawn of him are not of a nature to be forgotten or forgiven. I am ignorant of the present state of things in Spain but I know something of human nature, and that knowledge (and that knowledge) would lead me to doubt the policy of the writer of Estaban and Sandoval ⁵ putting himself in the power of any official who desires the favor of the beloved monarch. His writings are not merely the expression of political opinions but likewise personal invictive, to a vindictive and common mind unpardonable. If Ferdinand does not revenge he is not the man the author of those works described. Wherever you go you may be assured of my ardent wishes for your happiness and prosperity. I do not doubt my ability to show Dilke that his cause for displeasure arose altogether from a very pardonable ignorance on my part of the real state of accounts, he has proved himself in no common way my Freind when I stood in need of one, and will never find me forgetfull of his many favours. I have written to him.⁶ M^{rs} K. and children are well. Do not allow so much time to pass without writing again. I will write a few lines to M^r

Llanos on this sheet. M^{rs} K desires to [be] kindly remembered.

I am

my dear Sir ⁷

Your affectionate Brother

George Keats.

My dear Sir

I am talking of visiting England as soon as I can arrange my affairs to allow of a five months absence, I cannot fix upon the time at present; I fear however that you will have departed for your native land before I can make it convenient to come, it would afford me much gratification to see you and Fanny perhaps for the last time, and I still hope that circumstances will allow that pleasure by keeping you a little longer than Fanny seems to expect. M^{rs} K's situation will keep me at home untill February, I hardly hope to be able to leave home in the summer, therefore next winter will be the probable time of my visit. I speak at random and as you will see without information when I express fear for your safety in Spain—you ought to know best—be assured of my anxiety for your safety prosperity and happiness. Your volumes are placed among my favorites on my shelves and present themselves to my sight daily, they will prove unfailing remembrancers of your genius and kindly feelings towards me, as the honourable manner in which you have acted in the money transactions between us will of your honorable principles. I shall read Don Estaban ⁸ and Sandoval and Van Halen ⁹ again and examine if I have cause undoubted to fear for your safety in Spain, if you have brought to public view the vices of monsters in power you may depend on receiving punishment, if they have the power to inflict it whatever they may promise of safety and forgiveness. I hope most sincerely that you will not suffer from a too great confidence in the present quiet appearance of things.—I am sorry for your Brother's misfortunes and should have been pleased to have been in any way instrumental in saving him from them ¹⁰—It was notorious here

at the time he went that the native Mexicans were violently hostile to, and suspicious of old Spain Spaniards; had he mixed much in Society he will have heard enough to have induced him to give up his purpose of going to that country. M^{rs} K and Georgiana desire to be kindly remembered—we are all in good health, and I am enjoyi{ng} tolerable prosperity. Do me the favour to write when you have fixed on t{he} day of your departure for Spain, and again on your arrival at your spanish home. Wishing you health happiness and prosperity I subscribe myself Your Friend & Brother

Geo Keats.

¹ Fanny prefixed Kentucky.

² Born July 25, 1829, died August 15, 1834.

³ Mrs. George Keats's sister-in-law.

⁴ Ferdinand (Fernando) VII, king of Spain (1784–1833).

⁵ See pp. 38, 52, 55, above.

⁶ See George's letter of November 14 to Dilke (KC I, 320–324).

⁷ *A slip for Sister.*

⁸ *Don Esteban; Or, Memoirs of a Spaniard. Written by Himself* (3 vols.; London, 1825).

⁹ Llanos' *Narrative of Don Juan Van Halen's Imprisonment in the Dungeons of the Inquisition at Madrid, and His Escape in 1817 and 1818* (2 vols.; London, 1827). See pp. 57f., below.

¹⁰ On May 7, 1822, Fanny Brawne (*Letters of F. B.*, p. 64) told Fanny Keats that Llanos' "brother is gone to join the independents in South America rather odd that, to fight against his own country." From George's comments it appears that this or another brother was somehow involved in the unsuccessful attempt of Spain to reconquer Mexico in 1829—an attempt crushed by Santa Anna in September.

» 18 «

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

22 November 1830

Address: M^r Llanos/ Care of Mess^{rs} Reynolds & Simmons¹/ Golden Square/ London/ M^r Cuthbertson/ 44 South Molton St

Louisville Nov 22nd 1830

My dear Sister

I take advantage of M^r Cuthbertson's² departure for London to remind you of my existence, and remembrance. I have not heard from you since you informed me that it was your intention to go to Spain last summer—I wrote to you offering some arguments against such a proceeding, and am confirmed in the view I took of the subject, by seeing the manner in which the blessed Ferdinand treated some returned emigrants, who went back to their native country on the faith of his promises.³ I am not a little anxious for your safety during these revolutionary times, and cannot but suppose that M^r Llanos will in some way expose himself to help in the noble cause of regenerating Spain, in such affairs all exertions are dangerous, honour can only be obtained by exposure, and I am the last man to deter the patriot from following the speakings of his conscience. If he desires to be active in the great cause let him be constant and prudent not rash, and foolhardy, his country can be better served by the former, than the latter course—I see that Van Halen⁴ has reaped a world of honour in the Belgic revolution, I sincerely congratulate all those in their success who have so nobly shaken off that oppression entailed upon them by the mistakes of ages.—Present my best wishes to M^r Llanos. I am now so chained by business that I cannot hope to visit England for several years, I am the more easy under the confinement since my exertions are crowned with success, giving me a prospect of future wealth and the enjoyment of present comfort and com-

petence. Feeling so easy in my circumstances, I have directed Reynolds & Simmons not to urge my claim on the Walthamstow property ⁵ untill your lein on it is fully liquidated, if when you are paid there should be a residue, then I shall be well pleased to receive my claim. Having some expectation that you have removed from your former residence I shall address this to the care of Reynolds & S. if you are in London M^r Cuthbertson will call and tell you how we all are, namely. self Wife, Georgiana, Emma, Isabel, John, and Clarence.⁶ I should be pleased to hear from you and hope you will not give me cause to complain of neglect. Having but little time to write many letters I can only spare time to subscribe myself your very affectionate Brother

Geo. Keats.

¹ Who had replaced James Rice (died December, 1832). Much later Dilke gave his name as Arthur Symons.

² He also carried a letter of the same date to Dilke (KC I, 331f.).

³ Martin A. S. Hume, *Modern Spain* (New York, 1909), p. 256, remarks: "Modern civilisation has seen no such instance of brutal, blind ferocity as that which followed the arrival of Fernando in Madrid," November, 1823.

⁴ See p. 55, above, and Part VI, "La revolución de Bruselas en 1830," in Pío Baroja's *Juan Van Halen* (Madrid, 1933), pp. 303-330.

⁵ Which Abbey mortgaged to Llanos: see p. 62, below.

⁶ His dates are 1830-1861. After the first two children's names Fanny Llanos penciled "Emily" and "Frances," and then added after George's signature "Rosalind, the 2nd, dead I suppose/ See June 5 1825."

»» 19 ««

VALENTIN LLANOS TO GEORGE KEATS¹

3 January 1831 (?)

My dear Sir, What must you think of us and our protracted silence especially after (the) your letter to M^r Dilke, in which you conferred upon us (a benefit) an obligation as disinterested as it was timely? ² Probably, that we are ingrates entirely undeserving of it, (and indeed appearances would justify your entertaining such thoughts.) nor can I help acknowledging

that you would be borne out by appearances in forming such judgement upon our conduct. Yet I flatter myself you will (come to) arrive at a different conclusion after perusing these few lines. Indeed, were I not conscious of harbouring (unfeigned) in my breast aught but sentiments of the most unfeigned friendship and gratitude, I should not attempt to address you now when every thing conspires to incriminate me in your eyes. On the very day that (we heard from) Mr Dilke (the) communicated to us that part of your letter which concerned us, I (took up my pen) went my course (went) homewards with the intention of writing to thank you for the obligation you had conferred upon us, an obligation the more important as it removed difficulties and objections which threatened to involve me and my family in the most serious troubles, and perhaps ruin. You may therefore imagine (that) I was anxious to impart to you the grateful sentiments your brotherly conduct had inspired me with, (were of too grateful a nature not to urge me on to the pleasant task of communicating with one who had from) and that with as little delay as possible; but having (received immediately on the same day your information) on my way home called upon Mr Reynolds, who gave me to understand that the affair of the mortgage (for the conclusion of which I had so much toiled) was to be finally (arranged) settled on the following day, I deferred writing (that I might be able to tell you) in order to profit by the opportunity to inform you how matters were arranged. A delay of several days, however, (took place) from the part of Mr Reynolds took place and even (when) after the mortgage was paid off to the amount of £2500 I was left so much in ignorance with respect to the manner in which the remaining £400 were secured that up to this day I (cannot positively say) have not been able to ascertain it, though (of course) you may well imagine I have taken some trouble to find it out. The most painful part, however, of this business, and one indeed which has had no little influence in inducing me to remain silent is what I am about to relate, though I assure you I do it with consider-

able reluctance and regret, (and I would wish) nay, were it not that I think myself bound to impart to you those circumstances, I should altogether have suppress[ed] them here. The amount of the trust funds being ascertained and (agreed to there) invested by the trustees in the Bank of England, there remained a balance in (my) (our) favour of (about £) M^{rs} L. and self of about £780. This sum was handed over to M^r Reynolds by the trustees that it might be paid over to us, and (M^r R said that) he (intend) instead of immediately paying (it to us) the whole balance to us gave us a cheque for scarcely half the amount, and kept ³ back the rest for reasons which he either does not choose or is unable to explain. A series of disappointments too long to detail here (but brought on in a great measure by (the) M^r R's neglect of my business) had compelled me to contract debts (the greatest part of which was paid off by the money I had thus [?] to) (to a little money) which the sum I then received from M^r R. was scarce sufficient to cover—As far, however, as that sum went I paid them off; but the consequence was that (instead of a) I got rid of my ready cash in the vain expectation of being able (to) with the remainder to ameliorate our circumstances by applying it to the establishment of a clever and useful patent invention for which I have paid upwards of £1000, and which I shall now be obliged to sacrifice for what I may get,⁴ and I find myself (now) at present in as bad, or rather worse, a predicament than before. M^r R. though well acquainted with our circumstances, and aware of the deep injury he is doing me, by the delay, not only (does not pay me) continues withholding the money but has adopted the plan of never being at home to us, or even vouchsafing an answer to our repeated letters. On the other hand M^r Dilke, to whom I have communicated the facts, declines interfering on the ground that it would involve him in a quarrel with his friend Rey. forgetting that I have as good a claim upon the trustees for having paid over the money without any consent of ours to R. as upon the latter—(who) As, however, I know the ⁵ money has really been paid into R's hands, I have

⟨said nothing⟩ not thought it advisable to tell M^r D. so; ⟨but⟩ and no alternative is now left me ⟨but to try⟩ to recover it but the unpleasant one of bringing the matter before a court. That I have done all I could to avoid this you may ⟨well imagine⟩ infer from the fact that I have allowed, at the imminent peril of my personal liberty, upwards of five months to elapse since the ⟨aff⟩ mortgage affair was settled, and ⟨after all⟩ tried all ⟨means⟩ the arguments ⟨and⟩ & resorted to all the ⟨means within my reach⟩ friendly warnings to bring him to a sense of justice. This explanation will I have no doubt prove to you a satisfactory apology for my silence; which I ⟨could⟩ felt I could not break before without being guilty of concealment for I could not bring up my mind to make accusations of such a nature without ⟨giving⟩ affording the man ⟨as full much⟩ all this time to clear himself from them. Now, however, that I see the ⟨uselessness⟩ fallacy of such expectations, I hasten to write to you, sorry only that I have no better account to render to you. ⟨Were⟩ To you this account must be ⟨parti⟩ the more unpleasant as even your good wishes & kindness toward us have been in some measure defeated, nor can I help apprehending that in spite of your declaration to M^r Dilke ⟨of allowing us the precedence in the mortgage for the amount of money. . .to us⟩ M^r R. though well acquainted with your intention will when legally called upon to explain his conduct of waiving your claim in the mortgage until we had received the whole of the money thereby secured to us, urge in justification the necessity he was under of retaining the portion belonging to you in the mortgage, and should M^r D. by a reason similar to that he has already given me for not interfering in this affair declare showing the letter you sent him on this subject, the consequences to us may have the most serious results, though my opinion of M^r D. is that he would not be guilty of so great an injustice. If, however, ⟨it seems [?] some⟩ you should hit upon the means to obviate this ⟨should suggest themselves to you⟩ I know you will give us the benefit of it, and the more readily as it will easily occur to you

that such justification would be only a pretext on the part of Mr R. to retain for himself what he has no earthly right to. In conclusion I ought to tell you that previous to the settlement of the mortgage affair, I caused Abbey to execute a bill of Sale for £300 secured upon his chattels, cattle & on his premises at Walthamstow, which is also in the hands of Mr Reynolds. This bond is from Abbey to myself; but should it be made available (of which there is no chance as long as it is in R's hands) and the goods (there) at Walh. fetch the sum secured by the bond, there would be about ⁶ £160 coming to you to which I shall have to add two years' interest which is now owing from me to you, and which I intended to have paid with the money obtained by the mortgage. If I succeeded in (settling this unpleasant business with Mr R.) (obtained my end) recovering the money from Mr R. you may rely on my loosing no time to get it away from him & inforcing the said bond or try to obtain(ing) the amount of it if possible; for Abbey's situation is now so desperate that we run a fair chance of losing the benefit of even this trifling security.⁷

(Passing) A few days ago I met Mr Wylie, from whom ⁸ (informed me) I was very sorry to hear that Mrs K. was at the time you wrote suffering from a most dangerous and alarming illness, but as he had received no further news from you, and the proverb says that bad news travels fast, I hope she is now perfectly recovered.

¹ A "crossed" draft in which all the canceled words that can be deciphered are given. The letter actually sent seems to be referred to as dated January 3, 1831, in George's letter of March 24, 1831, following.

² On May 7, 1830 (KC I, 330), George wrote Dilke that he wished his sister to "get from it [Abbey's Walthamstow property] all her demands upon it, and if when she has been fully paid there is any left, I shall be well pleased to receive it."

³ *Changed from keeping.*

⁴ For George's comments to Dilke on the foolish bridle-bits patent of December 15, 1828, see the letter referred to in note 2.

⁵ *Changed from that.*

⁶ Athenaeum is written above would be about.

⁷ For George's comments on the matters Llanos here discusses, see his letter to Dilke of May 11, 1832 (KC II, 5). Dilke's reply of February 12, 1833 (KC II, 9), shows that Reynolds had a "total incapacity to pay money."

⁸ Originally who.

»» 20 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO VALENTIN LLANOS AND

FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

24 March 1831

Louisville March 24th 1831.

Mr V. Llanos. My dear Sir

Your letter of the 3rd Jan^y is now before me.¹ I am sorry Mr Reynolds should have caused you so much mortification and distress: it is scarcely possible that he can plead my rights as an excuse for withholding from you your's, since I wrote to Reynolds & Simmons April 22nd 1830 nearly as follows "Is the interest I have in the Walthamstow property worth any thing, calculating that I am not to receive any thing untill M^{rs} Llanos has rec^d to the full amount of her mortgage." ² Again in a letter sent by Mr Cuthbertson dated 22nd Nov. 1830 I wrote to them to this amount "I sincerely hope that the Walthamstow property will produce enough to pay M^{rs} Llanos' *claim*, if after she is fully paid there is a residue I shall be pleased to receive *mine*" Mr Cuthbertson wrote on the 1st Feb^y from London stating that R & S said so and so, from which I infer that he has seen them and of course delivered my letter. I cannot therefore but doubt that the 400£ you speak of can be retained by plea of my claims. When I resolved on placing Fanny on the footing I have thought proper to do, I could not do it more effectively than by writing to Reynolds and Dilke; I did not write to you on the subject because I had every reason to beleive that you would leave England for Spain before my letter would reach you, my last letter to you was dated 11 Nov 1829,³ since which date I have

not heard from you; It is therefore your own fault that you have not heard directly from me my intentions relating to this matter. I must confess that I have felt hurt that Fanny has paid so little attention to me as well lately, as when she knew how Abbey was imposing upon me formerly, and how entirely I depended on his integrity, a little information from her on subjects of so much importance to my pecuniary interests was called for by the occasion, and might be considered fairly due from her to me. However well these discrepancies may entitle her to punishment I hope she will 'escape any serious loss in this present affair. Please to write to me without any delicate reserves if there will be any residue after you are satisfied, and should the money fall into your hands remit it to me without loss of time. It seems to me that in the present disturbed state of Europe in general and of England in particular that there is much danger of the public funds and that the Trustees of Mr^s Llanos' estate might safely invest her money in some other way that would produce a better Interest and be more certain. Money is worth here 6 per Cent (legal Interest) and could be loaned on mortgage of real estate valued so low that loss would be almost impossible. Mr^s K desires her respects. I am

Your Friend & Brother
Geo. Keats.

My dear Fanny.

I must decline sending Tom's miniature ⁴ in consequence of the great uncertainty of its return and even of its delivery to you if sent, I am not willing to risk the loss of it; if ever I come to England it shall be my companion. Do not expect me before 1836. I hope the annexed note to R & S. will make a desirable settlement with them easy, if Mr Llanos' idea of the cause of his ruggedness is correct you may thank your *neglect* of me for all consequent misfortunes, but for *that* you will have rec^d such a note as this earlier in the business. We are all in pretty good health and living very comfortably. Write me something about

the estimate which the literati have of John's works, I see Lord Byron has used him vilely in his correspondence,⁵ adopting the abominable epithets of the blackguard Blackwood: he pretends all his dislike arose from John's strictures on the Pope school, I think however that Byron took to himself some of the criticism in *Sleep and Poetry*. How would he like to be estimated by his "hours of Idleness." His praise of *Hyperion* seems to me totally inconsistent with his more commonly expressed opinions, posterity cannot surely have any thing to do with the Johnny Keats he so often despises and redicules—Salute my nephew and neice for me and be a better correspondent in future to Your affectionate Brother

Geo. Keats

¹ Probably the letter copied from the preceding draft.

² He mentioned this letter to Dilke on May 7, 1830 (*KC I*, 330).

³ Probably he meant November 15 (see No. 17, above).

⁴ She had asked for it in her letter of May 31, 1826 (*KC I*, 299). The miniature is now in the Keats-Shelley House, Rome.

⁵ George had been reading Harper's New York edition (2 vols., 1830-31) of Thomas Moore's *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron: with Notices of His Life*.

»» 21 ««

GEORGE KEATS TO JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS¹

6 May 1832

Mr John Reynolds

Louisville Kentucky—May 6th—1832

Copy

Dear Sir,

Having reason to believe that my sister is much in need of money and supposing that you may have some of mine in your hands, I send her annex'd request for £100, or the Balance of acc^t if less than that sum. The Bal^{ce} of acc^t in my favor sent by M^{rs} K was £295.6.9. M^{rs} K rec^d on it £130—I am ignorant of am^t of your charges. In same acc^t you are credited by £100 remitted by Rice to pay Exp's on returned Dft.² I will not argue which

of us should lose this sum, but retain you as my Councillor to suggest the pros against your own cons, and however much the pros may beat the cons in argument, I am willing to compromise with a credit to me of £50. It is not impossible that something may be realised out of the Walthamstow Mortgage by the arrival of this. I most ardently hope you will feel justified in paying the order. Altho' I am in very thriving circumstances, a heavy money pressure now operating here, renders the abstraction of ever so small a sum from my business, an injury to my partner as well as myself; £100 is a much more important sum here, than it is with you—present my respects to your Father & Mother, and kind remembrances to Sisters, I hope in 1836 to shake hands with your facetious Brother,³ whose every annual is in my Bookcase, in company with the works he presented to me, I will thank him in person some day for the present, and the pleasure I have derived from the contents. Tell Mr Dilke he will hear from me soon. I hope Mr Rice enjoys better health than formerly. truly your's sig^d / Geo. Keats.

Copy of order refer'd to.

Louisville May 6th 1832

£100. $\frac{00}{100}$

At sight please to pay to the order of M^{rs} Llanos One Hundred pounds Sterling or the Balance in my favor in your hands if less than that amount, and much oblige Sig^d/Geo. Keats.

To Jn^o H Reynolds

London.

¹ A copy in an unidentified hand. The original was presumably not mailed until May 12 (see the postmark of the next letter).

² On this unaccepted draft see p. 40, above.

³ Thomas Hood, who married Jane Reynolds in 1825. His *Comic Annual* ran to eleven volumes, 1830–39, 1842. Hood never met George, and (as Professor Alvin Whitley tells me) in an unpublished letter of October 8, 1844, to one Watson he says of John Keats, "I did not know him personally."

→ 22 ←

GEORGE KEATS TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

6 (?) May 1832

Address: M^{rs} Llanos./ care of Henry Shea Esq^r./ N^o 10. Dowgate Hill.¹/
Mansion House/ London/ England.

Postmarks: LOUISVILLE KY MAY 12; PAID; LIVERPOOL SH{IP
LETTER}; G 20 JU 20 1832

My dear Sister. Cut off the above and present it to M^r Reynolds for payment,² I hope and trust it will produce to you the am^t it calls for. Your letters of 25 Jan^y and 18 Feb^y were a long time on the way, the latter came first to hand and the former was waited for to explain (the latter) its meaning. Having had such bad fortune in my English concerns, some of which I beleive you are unacquainted with, I have given up all attention to them untill I can arrange them in person some years hence perhaps in 1836. You have doubtless heard an exaggerated picture of my wealth, from what quarter I know not, it is as well however to apprise you of the real facts. I am engaged with one partner³ in a very extensive, and sufficiently profitable business, that requires a very large capital, and shall if no great commercial distress takes place be wealthy in a few years. Untill 1828 I was struggling with difficulties, that seemed from time to time insurmountable, and sufficient to have broken the spirit of many men, I had previous to that time prospects, and hopes, that a sanguine temperament will always suggest, in that year however I reallized three times my expences including M^{rs} Keats visit to England; since then I have regularly added to my capital, and real estate, partly by business, and partly by judicious purchases of property. I intend to continue in my present timber business untill I have built houses enough to yeild an annual rent sufficient to support my family in a liberal manner; when if the acquisitiveness of my character does not "encrease by what it feeds on"⁴ I shall retire from my present

engrossing occupation, and visit the country of my youth. Upon my real estate rests my credit, which has hitherto enabled me to extend my business to any extent, by paying an Interest of about $6\frac{3}{4}$ per Cent, within these 3 months however the U. S. Bank has been withdrawing its loans, thereby reducing my business capital, and the circulating medium generally, making the collection of debts more difficult than heretofore, and causing me considerable trouble, and a general stagnation. Under these circumstances it will require all my means and management to swim where so many are sinking. Before the pressure began, our house had commenced two extensive buildings, a Saw Mill cost 10,000 dollars, a planing Mill and patent right 8,000 dollars, both of which are now in operation, and requiring more capital to carry them on, than we have hitherto required—Being the man of business of the concern, my partner being principally engaged in the Yards, and attending to the superintendence of the hands, nearly all responsibility rests with me. It is true we have as much owing to us as we need, owing however to the s[c]arcity of money we cannot collect our funds, and are therefore hard pressed to carry on with our accustomed punctuality our extended concerns. I give you this outline to show you, that altho' I am thriving and shall probably become wealthy, I am not now so rich as you seem to think. I am obliged to you for your congratulations on my prosperity, which considering the circumstances that have surrounded me is truly astonishing to myself when I look back to the past. What is termed rich here, is very moderate independence in England—£1000 a year from real estate is Called rich, my expences are about 600£ a year and I live handsomely without paying much attention to minute economy. At the time I invited you to come to Kentucky I did it in sincerity of heart and with a hope of seeing you—I did not urge you warmly because I doubted if you would be pleased with the society of the place, or our mode of living which at that time was very quiet, and because it might seem that I had interested motives for so doing. You were at the time in good

circumstances as I thought, and no destitute orphan, certainly better off than I was, and without encumbrances, I did not look upon you as uncherished or unprotected or in any respect in want of a home. Your letter of complaint contained the intention you had of "changing your condition," ⁵ which I asked you to explain, and which meant that you were going to be married, I presume then that your marriage, and not the coldness of my invitation must have determined you not to come to America. If you were better acquainted with my disposition you would not have thought for an instant that my invitation was a mere form, "a sugar plumb." M^{rs} K and myself often talked about providing for your comfort and amusement. As to my neglecting to arrange to bring you out, what steps could I have taken beyond assisting you after your arrival at New York, which I promised to do. Your pathetic description of my indifference and unfeeling conduct towards you, is, I can assure you a mere "man of Straw," and only requires a candid and unprejudiced reperusal of my letters to overturn it. I remember distinctly that I always invited a regular correspondence, and was seldom indulged with a letter. No more of this, let it be forgotten, it shall never be again revived by me.—My hands are so full that I have neither time nor capital to apply to any new concern, and if I had both I have obtained enough experience, to be sure, that money cannot be made in any business that is not well understood by those who carry it on. Your project might possibly succeed in one of [the] Eastern cities, in the hands of a man who perfectly understands it, and is withal a man of business, but here I am sure however feasible and economical the plan may be, it would not succeed. You may suppose how unprepared we {are} for works of the kind you mention, when you hear that our Streets are not lighted at all, and we are not yet furnished with water works: there are not any Gas works West of the Alleghanies. I hope soon to hear from M^r Llanos agreeably to his promise, and sincerely wish that his future undertakings will result more prosperously than the past. I

regret much to learn that he has so much cause of dissatisfaction with Reynolds, who seems to have behaved in a most unaccountable manner. My best resp^{ts} and wishes to M^r L. and love to the children and rem^s to the Wylie's. I am

Your affectionate Brother
Geo. Keats.

On reflection I hardly think it probable that this will find you in London, it cannot arrive untill the end of June and you propose starting for Spain in the Spring. M^{rs} K had purchased some presents to be sent to England by a Friend who will probably arrive in Liverpool in August, and under the impression that you will have departed before that time she has returned the one intended for you.

¹ Shea is listed as a merchant at this address in Pigot's London directory for 1823-24.

² She cut off about two-thirds of the first page, which presumably bore the original letter of which that preceding (dated May 6) is a copy.

³ Daniel Smith, who lived between Green and Walnut streets on Fifth.

⁴ Compare *Hamlet*, I. ii. 144f.

⁵ See p. 20, above. George told Dilke about these complaints on May 11, 1832 (KC II, 4f.).

»» 23 ««

FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS (?) TO GEORGE KEATS¹

May (?) 1832

My dear brother. About four months ago I wrote to you, informing you of ⟨my⟩ our intended journey to Spain, and explaining ⟨to you⟩ certain circumstances that ⟨had⟩ obliged me to have recourse to you for the loan of £100. Two or three weeks after, I wrote again, to communicate to you a project which I thought might be of service to you, if it could be brought to bear in America. ⟨and⟩ In this letter I also alluded to the subject of our intended visit to Spain, and to the request I had made in my former—I have received no answer To ⟨n⟩either of these

letters (I have received no answer), though more than sufficient time has now elapsed for me to have received a reply (to) even to the last. If (I know anything of your character) my estimate of your character be correct, I can not attribute your silence to the request I was compelled by circumstances to make, and am therefore (am quite) the more at a loss to account for it, as I there (urged) begged you would answer me without any delay, that the object (for such) I had in view by making such an application might not be defeated. As matters have turned out the delay has caused me no inconvenience, but it has vexed me, for in spite of the high opinion I have of your character, & the credit I give you for brotherly kindness & generous feelings, (suspicions would intrude that the request I made might have some thing to do with your silence) I cannot help feeling that you are not quite so keenly alive to my comfort and happiness as I had foolishly imagined. I know that I have also sins of omission to answer for to you. (but [?] and therefore little to complain of) Still, I believe, that you would not tak(ing)e the opportunity of showing me your displeasure (when pressed) at the very time when I apply to you for assistance. Whatever be the cause, I, however, hope that the present may not share the same fate as my former ones. I now write to inform you that owing in some measure to the serious illness of Irene, our eldest child,² (our departure may) (in part, and) but principally to the (unfair & unworthy) disgraceful conduct of John Reynolds, who, after retaining a (considerable balance as his, which he had received) sum of money of consequence to us in our present circumstances, to meet, as he says, his account, will neither deliver this nor the money, we have been obliged to suspend our journey,³ till we see the end of this matter, which we have been obliged to put into the hands of a lawyer, with whom (he) R has been playing the game of a litigious & dishonourable man. (it so happening that neither (either) Mr Dilke or Mr Rice) This matter might have been greatly simplified had either of the trustees stepped forward in the business; but as (the latter) Mr Rice

is the particular friend of R. & (the former) Mr Dilke (does) (will) does not (move without the) like to offend either the one or ⁴ the other by (pressing) espousing our cause, it must go before a Court if

¹ Since Fanny Llanos wrote to her brother "four months ago" and "two or three weeks after," that is (see George's letter of May 6 [?], 1832) on January 25 and February 18, this draft in the hand of Llanos but intended, I think, for his wife was probably written late in May or early in June. Because the Llanoses postponed their migration to Spain until the following summer, and because George's letter of May 6 (?) reached London on June 20, one can only hope that the draft was discarded and not sent.

² Who died in January, 1833.

³ According to Adami, pp. 136f., they went to Spain in the early summer of 1833.

⁴ Written of.

»» 24 ««

GEORGE KEATS: TWO POEMS¹

The Influence of tea upon the *Ladies*

Dear Tea, that enlivener of Wit and of Soul,
 More loquacious by far than the draughts of the Bowl
 Soon unloosens the tongue, and enlivens the mind,
 And enlivens the eyes to the faults of mankind,
 It brings on the tapis their neighbours defects,
 The faults of their Friends, or their wilful neglects,
 Reminds them of many a good-natured ² tale,
 About those who are stylish, or those who are frail;
 In harmless Chit Chat an acquaintance they roast,
 And serve up a friend, as they serve up a toast,
 The Wives of our men of inferior degree,
 Will sip up repute in a little *Bohea*,
² { With *Hyson* a beverage still more refin'd,
 { Our Ladies of fashion enliven their mind.

1 { But the scandal improves (a refinement in wrong)
 { As our Matrons are richer and rise to *Souchong*,³
 And by nods inuendoes and hints and what not
 Reputation and Tea send together to Pot,
 While Madam in Cambrics, & Laces array'd
 With her plate and her liveries in splendid parade,
 Will drink in *Imperial* a friend at a sup,
 Or in *gunpowder*, blow them by dozens all up.

G K

On Woman

Happy a man may pass his life,
 If freed from matrimonial chains,
 If he's directed by a Wife,
 He's sure to suffer for his pains.

What tongue is able to unfold
 The falsehoods that in Women dwell,
 Virtues in Women you behold,
 Are almost imperceptible.

Adam could find no solid peace,
 When Eve was given for a mate
 Till he beheld a Woman's face,
 Adam was in a happy state.

For in this sex you'll see appear
 Hypocrisy, deceit, and pride,
 Truth, darling of a heart sincere
 In Women never can reside.⁴

Distraction take the men, I say,
 Who make the Women their delight,
 Who no regard to Women pay;
 Keep reason always in their sight.

Ceux qui sont plus favorablement enclin vers les dames, qu'ills

lisent la première & troisième line & ensuite la seconde & quatrième de chaque Vers.

G. K.

¹ Each undated poem is on one side of a single leaf. In the right-hand margin of page 2, penciled and partly erased, is written: "I think George Keats must be a perfect divine if he made these Lines for I am sure he meant to have the first and second line read so—as nothing could proceed from his angelic lips not bearable with respect to the fair sex.

"Signed {Valentin} Llanos"

² *Written* good-natured.

³ Apparently George intended the couplets to be transposed.

⁴ *In the right margin is the word happy.*

→ 25 ←

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

3 July 1861¹

Envelop addressed: Madam Keats Llanos/ with 3 Vols, Rome

B. Consulate July 3

My dear Madam Llanos

At a quarter to 5. today M^r Odo Russell ² calls for me to see the Luca della Robbia If you like at that hour to join us here, with your charming family I shall be glad—

The 3 vols of Rome ³ I now send & beg to say it will be a pleasure to me if you will command me in any thing else for I feel great regret at the loss of your dear society even for awhile & therefore 'tis a pleasure to me that you should possess my books meanwhile, even to remind you of our singular meeting & spontaneous friendship which has been one of those rare things occurring once only in our lives.

I scarce remember if I mentiond to M^r Brockman ⁴ the desire I feel to recommend to his notice Sig^e Francesco Franz the young engineer whom I was so fortunate as to rescue from such a cruel fate ⁵—If I did not mention him & my hope that should

a vacancy occur Mr Brockman may kindly employ him; I beg the favor of you to do so—for I am fully assured of the admirable character & skill of my protoge—he is 22 years of age

Very Sincerely Yours

Joseph Severn

To M^{rs} Llanos

¹ Severn was appointed British consul to Rome in January, 1861. Fanny Llanos with various members of her family arrived there in March. She and Severn met, appropriately enough, on April 6 in the house wherein Keats had died, and became at once devoted friends. In July, as the first five letters of the present series (Nos. 25–29) show, the Llanoses and Brockmanns moved to Naples, where they remained for over a year.

² Odo William Leopold Russell (1829–1884), son of the ninth Duke of Bedford; attaché at Naples, 1860; on special diplomatic service at Rome, 1860–1870; created Baron Ampthill of Ampthill, 1881.

³ Possibly some edition of Paul Letarouilly's *Edifices de Rome moderne* with three volumes of some three hundred fifty plates.

⁴ Leopold Brockmann, husband of Fanny Llanos' daughter Isabel, chief consulting engineer (1861–1864) for the Roman railways that were just being built. Before leaving Italy he was made a papal count.

⁵ Severn "was able to rescue his secretary's brother from prison in Rome by clever handling of the Papal authorities, and got him a position on the Naples railways through his influence with the Government of Italy" (Birkenhead, p. 215). But see Severn's letters of September 21, below.

→» 26 «←

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS¹

21 September 1861

Envelop addressed: To/ Madam Keats de Llanos/ Palazzo Serrecapriola/
Chiaja ²/ Napoli/ per presentare Sig^r F. R. Franz

B. Consulate Sep^r 21

My dear Madam Llanos

This is to introduce to your kind notice Sig^r Francesco Rossler Franz³ the brother of my Secretary for whom you have been so much interested on my account

Whilst I am writing this I dont know if he may be able to get

away from Rome, for his Passport was this morning refused & on my interference I could well understand that some other persecution was intended, so I insisted on having the Passport & with much difficulty it was granted, but only on the condition that he should never return unless with the permission of the Roman government—

It must be private malice & envy as he was so successfull in his mathematical studies in the Roman University

I am sure I need not say more to command your kind attention to him

believe Sincerly Yours
Joseph Severn

¹ Enclosed in the letter next following (which was written first).

² The Strada di Chiaja.

³ See pp. 74f., above, and p. 77 n., below.

» 27 «

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS¹

21 September 1861

British Consulate Sep 21, 1861

My dear Madam Llanos

How much I regret that I cannot join you at Naples now that the cool weather has come—It would be such a pleasure to me to go & see the sights of Naples with you & your charming family, but I fear that the passing events are so important that I dare not be away & indeed the stirring events which have transpired since you left Rome, in addition to the great loss of your society, make it appear like years to me

I am very gratefull to you ² for your kindness in procuring from Signor Leopoldo ³ the place as Sub engineer under Sig^e Rossi, & which I am sure he would [have accepted] but I have been astonishd at just hearing that the Roman Police now refuse his Passport—at the moment I am writing this I dont

know how it will finish, but I have to settle it by a sturdy visit to the Governor of Rome when I have written this—The persecution of this young man is beyond the usual doings here

I am sorry to find that the heat has been so great at Naples as to prevent you going about.—We have kept quietly at home & not sufferd I have been able to paint every day & have begun early in the mor^g,—perhaps my house is remarkably cool & *cold* in the winter.—I am going in a week to the Poli Palace over the Fountain of Trèvi where I have an unfurnishd apartment with high windows

It interests me to hear that you are to make such a long sojourn at Naples & I have no doubt that at last I shall find you there before you find me here, for the rail way may be finishd before you leave Naples & then I must go in it in the general rejoicings

As yet I have not got my family nor indeed the news that they have actually set out, so my feares for my dear wifes health are renew'd—My Son ⁴ is very well, he has always been painting & begs now to be most kindly rememberd to you

You will be very anxious about the well being of Madam Brockman ⁵ & tis fortunate you went to Naples

Ask M^r Llanos if the Spanish Guittar player went to England after all?

Your Son I am sure must have made a picture of great beauty from the Correggio, judging from his work done at the Doria ⁶—Your other son ⁷ I hope will be soon with you & I conclude will come with his father, then you will be quite happy—Your bird & your humble servant are in the same condition without our coats—his is moulting & mine has been stolen.—he dont yet sing

Good bye, with my love to all your dear ones beleive me
Yours sincerely

Joseph Severn

¹ Enclosed with the preceding letter of introduction.

² *Written* your.

³ Brockmann. Severn apparently wrote *Sognior*, and forgot to name the F. R. Franz of the preceding letter.

⁴ Arthur (see p. 92 n., below).

⁵ Leopold's mother.

⁶ Juan ("John" or "my brother brush," as Severn later calls him) copied at the Doria-Pamphili Palazzo, Rome, with its eight hundred pictures.

⁷ Luis (born 1843).

»» 28 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

5 November 1861

Palazzo Poli Tues Nov^r 5th 1

My dear M^{rs} Llanos

I have just got yours of the 1st touching the extraordinary report of M^r Kenrick—'Tis true that he & the Lady were 10 months at the Hotel del'Europa without paying & that Madam Melga the mistress (English) paid their journey to Naples

Also that I strove to get him a situation influenced by the good opinion of Madam Melga (who had certainly paid for it) & also that he wrote me a gentlemanlike letter which satisfied me as regards his education, but I wondered as you do that being penniless they should think of going to an expensive Hotel so judging from your letter I begin to think them adventurers for what reason but a dishonest one could they have for going to the Vittoria? ²—

I did not apply to M^r Brockman but only to the V. Consul at Chiveti-Vecchia ³ & certainly I have not authorised them to go to you or M^r Bonham—Madam Melga was satisfied of their respectability 'tho she has given up all hope of her money for the relations would have nothing more to do with them

I regret that you should have bestowd [?] any on I fear undeserving people, but yet 'tis my duty to tell you that Madam Melga wishes me to say every thing I can in their favor which I have & which is very little

I thought Miss Brockman looking so well & so handsome & I

trust you all look as well & how I long to see all those looks—Mr Brockman was also in excellent looks & he gave such a good account of my protégé Francesco Franz ⁴ that I was much gratified

My Quadraccio I am glad to tell you is generally admired & thought to be an original—I am glad that John ⁵ liked it—You are right he should [make] some good copies at Naples which are sure to sell

My dear wife is not yet come & I [am] alarmed lest she is too ill to come on ⁶

Mr Russell has just arrived & brought news that there is *no chance* of the French *ever* leaving Rome ⁷

My new house pleases me much as it is so ample but I shall be years furnishing it at a pins head a quarter.—

My doings in Rome would astonish you if you could know them.—I am so rejoiced to hear all the favorable news of your Naples sojourn & the good resulting from it, My love to all your dear family & also my Sons who feels with me the length of your absence Yours affectionately ⁸

Joseph Severn

¹ Tuesday, November 5, came in 1861.

² I know nothing about the persons Severn discusses except for E. W. Bonham, C.B., British consul-general at Naples, Palazzo Calabritto, Strada di Chiaja. John Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Italy* (1853) says (pp. 84f.) that the Gran Bretagna, kept "by S. Melga, brother of the landlord of the Europa [in the Piazza di Spagna] at Rome, and formerly master of the Crocelle, is now, perhaps, the best hotel in Naples," but that the Vittoria, on the Largo della Vittoria is "not inferior, except in situation." Murray's 1858 edition remarks (p. 64) that the charges at the Vittoria "have been complained of lately."

³ So *apparently* for Civita Vecchia.

⁴ See pp. 74–76, above.

⁵ For John see p. 78 n., above. Severn intended to write *quadrucchio*, a small picture.

⁶ She died at Marseilles in April, 1862.

⁷ Russell (see p. 75 n., above) was a poor prophet, for they left in 1870.

⁸ The word looks like "affectiontively."

» 29 «

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

22 August 1862

Envelop addressed: To/ Madam Keats de Llanos/ Castleamare/ J.
Severn favored by Henry Wreford Esq^r 1/ Palazzo Illino

Rome Pal. Poli Aug 22

My dear M^{rs} Llanos

As I wrote you almost two months ago, & fear you never got my letter, I take the opportunity of a friend going to Naples M^r Wreford to trust this to his carefull hand

I had the pleasure to hear of your well being from Lady C. Stuart² to whom you had been so kind that she spoke of it several times very gratefully & gave me your kind request that I would visit you at Castleamare³ this would indeed be a gratification to me but I fear 'tis impossible for in addition to the very important things occurring daily & in which I am of use inasmuch as I can do good to suffering people & also the momentious nature of Rome itself; I have now my "Marriage of Cana"⁴ which begins to be a kind of daily enchantment to me, as it is the best composition I have ever made—there are 26 figures & I am just commencing to paint them from nature my picture being all painted in with transparent colours So you will perceive that however I might find Rome dull, this picture serves to enliven my solitude

I have the pleasure to hear that M^r Brockman is just now returning & trust to have the gratification of seeing him—

I think you know that my Son Arthur went to London last month & is now in full activity with his brot^r doing the illuminated almanack, with M^{rs} Norton writing the poetry—⁵

I have invited my eldest daughter M^{rs} Gale⁶ to spend the winter with me as I am concernd to find that she has been suffering from a cough all the time of my Consulate, I dont

know if she will come as she has a very young family—I hope your dear baby ⁷ is well & growing beautifully as he was in Rome & also that his charming mama lets him cry that he may have a fine voice Then I can fancy I hear Rosa's ⁸ piano for she fascinated the Countess ⁹ with her music & I trust that the Miss Brockmans are well thro' this intense heat & in good health—It has even beat our famous Tivoli—Then I trust your own dear self is in full enjoyment of health in your beautifull sojourn

M^r Wreford who kindly takes this is the admirable "Times correspondent" & is now on his way to Sicily—He is sadly disappointed that the railway is not open as he lookd forward to going to & fro continually from Rome to Naples ¹⁰—If M^r Brockman could permit him to go when there is the chance of a train it would be a very great favour, indeed I think he might be of service in making known in England the *cruel position of the railway*—of which I hear *no hopes* of opening—I shall be very glad to hear from you & beg to present my love to all your dear circle—Did M^r Llanos go to London? & is John ¹¹ painting?

Yours very sincerely

Joseph Severn

¹ Wreford was the author of *Le Prigioni italiane dinanzi al governo ed al parlamento. Lettere tre del Cav. Enrico Wreford corrispondente del Times* (Naples, 1869). Another hand added "Palazzo Illino" on the envelop, which, like the letter paper, is black-edged (Severn's wife had died in April).

² Emmeline Bathurst, wife of the third Earl of Castle Stewart (1807–1857), who at the Villa Stuart, Rome, June 27, 1867, married Alessandro Pistocchi, chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and died there on January 7, 1893. Her father was Benjamin Bathurst, the diplomat (1784–1809) whose death in Germany remains one of the great unsolved mysteries of the century.

³ Castellammare di Stabia on the Bay of Naples.

⁴ See pp. 82, 87, 89, 94, 99, below.

⁵ *The Golden Calendar. With a Perpetual Almanac Illustrated by Walter Severn. And with New Poems by Various Authors* (London, n.d. [1865]). Dedicated to the Princess Mary of Cambridge, the book contains verses by some twenty-five poets, but no Norton is anywhere mentioned.

⁶ Claudia Fitzroy Severn married Frederick Gale (1823–1904), barrister and well-known cricket player, in 1852. She died in 1874.

⁷ Isabel Brockmann's son Ernesto.

⁸ Fanny Llanos' fourth child (1832–1905). Dobell's cat., no. 273, August, 1918, offered a small note of Isabella endorsed: "Ms. of John Keats given to Henry

⁹ Lady Castle Stewart (see note 2).

¹⁰ The Caserta and Capua line, connecting Naples with Rome, was begun in December, 1843, but was not completed till the end of August, 1862. Three other lines of 719 miles were under contract to the Bastoggi Company, which engaged to complete them in 1868.

¹¹ Juan Llanos (1831–1905).

»» 30 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

9 February, March 1867¹

Rome Feb 9th 1867

My dear Friends

You wrote me a most beautifull letter of condolence which I often read & which amongst the many I received is to me the most true & consoling, but I have never quite recovered [from] the ² blow & I fear I never shall—but I'll try to be cheerfull & not write sadness of which you have already too much

You kindly ask about my painting & of this I can answer favorably—my picture of the marriage at Cana is now very near done ³ & all my f^{ds} think it the best of all my works, for I have [been] able to indulge myself in taking all means to make it perfect—the subject is so beautifull & also my view of it is quite my own ⁴ so these were great inducements I should have sent it to the Paris exhibition

March 22

but for serious illness during the whole winter not only two attacks of Bronchitis (not so bad as when I first had the happiness to meet you) also a general rheumatism particularly in my right arm and this prevented me finishing my picture & still makes me feel 90 years old!

My daughter Eleanor is in England where she went Dec^r 9th to attend Walters marriage with Mary Dalrymple Fergusson ⁵ & where she is to remain until October, for last summer she had a nervous fever & I had great fears of losing her, but fortunately

I had that beautifull Villa at Frascati belonging to the King of Italy (which His Majesty lends me most graciously eve[r]y year) & that set her up for she was enchanted—she had the company of Miss Winter ⁶ who has been staying with us ever since you left Rome—Left Rome! what a loss to me & I now feel it more than ever as I am alone for we lived in charming friendship as tho' we had always lived together & as tho' it was to last for ever.—Yet as I well remember you had a serious objection to my ugly gigantic staircase; you will now be pleased to hear, that I am to have the Florence Palace which by the treaty of Peace has become the property of the Italian crown & which consigns to me as His representative & also for the services which I have rendered to the Italian gov^t, but I dont know when I am to get possession for the Papal party is so openly indignant that they declare they'l rather burn down the Palace than that I should live in it,—& as the plan of the Italian gov^t is now to conciliate the priesthood at *any price*, so I must bide my time, but I cannot help telling you that there is a good staircase & so there may be a chance in these wonderfull times of your coming to keep house with me in this Ambassadorial Palace, which retains its fine furniture & has a garden! & I shall thus be rent free ⁷—Is there a chance of your ever coming to Rome again? The project of the Marcian Acqueduct which I remember was just talked of when you left is now well set up in an Anglo Roman comp^y & the work going on but without the old acqueduct!! ⁸ It was found easier & cheaper to convey the water by *cast iron pipes* straight to Rome, the affair has been warmly taken up & directed by M^r Shepherd of the Gas—I have taken 50 Shares at £20 each & all the shares were sold in a week! for the Rome caught at them with the greatest avidity ⁹—As I bore in mind what you intimated that dear Count Brockman would undertake such a work so I proposed him to M^r Shepherd, but the change of plan to the iron pipes had obliged him to find an engineer connected with the iron works—he is a frenchman—but the work does not make much progress as yet Lady Castle

Stuart ¹⁰ was just now here & begs me to remember her most kindly to you all—Now how I should like to know that dear Brockman is well established in health & satisfied with his present occupation of banker,¹¹ that the charming Countess & her dear ones are well & that Rosa [is] still filling the house with her divine harmonies she still retains her place as the *pearl* of my picture ¹²—

You see I am going to indulge in another halfsheet—I am afraid you will not be able to write me about many pleasant *present* things but that we shall be obliged to go back & back for our enjoyment with the pen—I am sorry to tell you that I made nothing of L^d Houghton, who even snubbed me as regards my notes to “Adonais” ¹³ my son thought he was jealous of any compe[ti]tion as he was bringing out a larger edition of his life of your illustrious brother ¹⁴ & he never answered me about yourself & the pension—¹⁵

Here in Rome none of my countrymen think (not even Mr Gladstone ¹⁶) that there is any need of a new tomb on the contrary they all prefer to see the old one—the Box you planted ¹⁷ has grown up full 3 feet & is very solid & ample for the lovers of the Poet

You kindly enquire after my Son Arthur who I am glad to say is a model goo[d] boy—He continues to advance in his painting, & sell his works & I continually hear great praises even from Strangers who enquire if I am related to him! You pleasantly tell me that you are all united in one house & that you are opposite the Gallery of pictures & you very kindly invite me to pay you a long visit which would indeed be charming, but I am here tied by the leg for life perhaps & indeed I doubt that the F. O. would let me leave even for a day!

March 30 I am glad to tell you that I am now getting better & can write with comparative ease You must tell me how my brother brush is getting on do send me one of Louis's Caricatures—I congratulate you on having another grandson & I have no doubt he is as handsome as the first

I am greatly amused on having to think *only of myself now* for all my life I have been doing & thinking for others, now I study egotism in every shape & enjoy all its oddities *for me* ¹⁸

Good bye my dear friends & pardon the delay which my illness has caused

Yours very sincerely

Joseph Severn

¹ Severn's dates of March 22, 30 are wrong, for the letter is accompanied by an envelop addressed "a/ Madam Keats di Llanos/ Calle de Lope de Vega No 61—Cuarto derecha/ piso 2^{do}/ Madrid/ J. S." (actually Severn is writing to the whole family), with various postmarks, as Rome on March 23, Lyons and Marseilles on March 26, Madrid on March 29, while at the top of what he calls "another halfsheet" Fanny Llanos penciled "Mar 20 1867."

² *Written* the the. Severn's artist-daughter, Ann Mary, who had married the archaeologist Charles Thomas Newton (1816–1894) on April 27, 1861, died in London on January 2, 1866.

³ See p. 99, below.

⁴ Eric Robertston (in Sharp, p. 303) says that the picture "evinced a touch of genius in representing the transformed water poured from one pitcher at first transparent as crystal, but changing colour in its arc, like a rainbow, and descending red into the other pitcher."

⁵ Daughter of Sir Charles Dalrymple Fergusson, Bart. She and Walter Severn (October 12, 1830–September 22, 1904) married on December 28, 1866.

⁶ Birkenhead, pp. 222f., says that Victor Emmanuel gave Severn, who in 1864 was made consul at Rome for the kingdom of Italy, his royal Frascati villa for the summers of 1864 and 1865. Evidently Severn also had it in 1866 and was expecting it in 1867. It is at least possible that Miss Winter is the person mentioned by Keats in *Letters*, p. 309.

⁷ The Palazzo di Firenze, near the Palazzo Borghese, was in 1867 the property of the Tuscan government and the residence of its minister to the Vatican. Severn did not get it but remained to the end in the Palazzo Poli.

⁸ The Aqua Marcia was first brought to Rome in 145 B.C. The project Severn speaks of, involving restoration as well as the use of some sixteen miles of iron pipes, was completed in September, 1870.

⁹ See pp. 87, 89, 98, below. *Severn intended to write for the Romans.*

¹⁰ See p. 80, above.

¹¹ A fact not noted by Adami, pp. 175f. See p. 89, below.

¹² Sharp, p. 251 n., and Adami, p. 158, say that Isabel Brockmann was one of the models for "The Marriage of Cana." Severn's comment here and on p. 99, below, about Rosa Llanos indicates that they were mistaken.

¹³ For years Severn hoped to publish "a folio edition of the 'Adonais,' with annotations and notes, to be illustrated after specially made designs by himself

and his two artist-sons, Walter and Arthur" (Sharp, p. 213; see also p. 257, and Birkenhead, p. 233).

¹⁴ *The Life and Letters of John Keats . . . A New Edition* (London, 1867).

¹⁵ Severn wrote to Houghton on September 28, 1864 (*KC* II, 326f.), suggesting that he approach Lord Palmerston about granting Mme. Llanos a pension.

¹⁶ Gladstone as a member of Lord Russell's government had appointed Severn consul to Rome. Fanny Llanos and Severn had planned in 1864 to erect a new tombstone over Keats's grave (Adami, pp. 163-165).

¹⁷ Sharp, p. 252 n., and Adami, p. 161, say that she planted two bay trees beside her brother's grave.

¹⁸ See his restatement on pp. 89, 95, below.

»» 31 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

29 March 1869

Envelop addressed: To/ M^{re} di Llanos/ Calle de Lope de Vega N^o 61/
Cuarto derecha piso 2^{do}/ Madrid/ J. S. Rome

Postmarks (some imperfect): ROMA 5 APR 69; 3 F AVRIL 69 3 S^t
MICHEL; PP; PARIS ETRANGER 69 8 AVRIL; BORDEAUX A 9
AVRIL 69; MADRID (1) 10 ABR 69

BRITISH CONSULATE. ROME ¹

29th March 1869

My dear M^{re} de Llanos

The great pleasure of seeing dear Lewis has resolved the mystery of my never hearing from you—two letters of mine & one of Eleanors have remained what? in the post,—never delivered? or how

We are enchanted to hear good news of you all & with it to call up your charming sojourn in Rome & a vivid remembrance of those happy days from the day when you & I met like brother & sister, when we sat in silence hand in hand with your daughters, mutually astonishd at such a meeting & in such a place—twas a romance *aye & is so still*

you will no doubt have heard of Lord Houghton having

publishd a new edition of your illustrious brothers life with many additions, also a 2^d Vol of all the Poems which I have not yet got, the life is very beautifully printed ²

I have got my dear twins with me at present—they have grown strong & really clever—Eleanor still improves in the “gift of the gab” & has been acting with great success—Arthur is doing the artist in good style & even making money, his drawings I see now for the first time tho’ many strangers ask me if the young artist is related to me!!

I have been a sufferer from rheumatism & am still, tho much less & last Autumn I was struck down by inflammations of the bowels, which nearly did for me, indeed my Roman f^{ds} say that I ought to have died for that they alway die!! eating an excess of fruit the cause

Rome is much as you left it except that the acqua Marcia which was just commenced is now near completion & bids fair to be a fine & usefull undertaking I have 50 Shares in it & have paid a thousand pounds ³—It is to supply a very fine water up to the top stories as it comes from a lake up in the mountains 38 miles of between Tivoli & Subiaco

Will you ever visit Rome again? I am afraid not for now that you are all settled at Home with all your interests to cultivate, twill be difficult to move about

Here am I going on just as you left me with no change but my hair tumbling of—My Sect^{ies} ⁴ the same, but my house is very much brushd up & I have the meetings of the English Archaeological Society ⁵—my painting flourishes tho the marriage at Cana is not quite done but I have taken great pains with it ⁶

Lewis has grown such a fine lad & I was delighted to find that he has such a charming appointment

Dear Rosa excells in her beautifull Music as much as ever, & the Count & Countess with your granchildren must be a great comfort to you

Now I hope you wont snub me any longer, but let me have a

friendly line as you used to do.—With my kindest regards to all your dear circle I remain

Your affectionate f^d
Joseph Severn

¹ Embossed address.

² Severn refers to the 1867 biography (see p. 86 n., above), a "Note" in which promises an edition (which did not appear) of the poems "to be printed uniform with this volume." Severn's acknowledgment to Houghton for the 1867 volume will be found in KC II, 328.

³ See p. 83, above, and p. 98, below.

⁴ Severn's secretary was Alexander R. Franz. The latter's brother Francesco (see pp. 74–77, above), says Birkenhead, p. 228, in 1868 joined Severn's secretary "and together, when Joseph [Severn] was ill, they stood between him and the outside world, and by stratagem and subterfuge protected him from prying eyes." She also describes (pp. 231, 235) Alexander Franz as British vice-consul at Rome in 1872 (according to John Murray's *Handbook of Rome* [London, 1875], p. 22, his vice-consulate was at 133 Via del Buffalo) and as one of the two trustees appointed in Severn's will.

⁵ Shakespeare Wood, the sculptor, was secretary of the British Archaeological Society, John Henry Parker, writer on architecture, its most active member.

⁶ See p. 99, below.

»» 32 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

8 December 1870

Envelop addressed: Madame de Llanos/ cura di Signor Francisco Blanco/
Calle de S. Juan N° 46/ Madrid/ J. S. Rome

Postmarks (partly illegible): ROMA 2 S 9 DIC 70; PD; MA{DRI}D (1)
11 DIC 70.

BRITISH CONSULATE ROME ¹

My dear M^{rs} de Llanos

Rome 8th Dec^r 1870

I have just [read] your very interesting letter which is a joy to me, for I had written twice & Eleanor once without any answer & in your former note you mention having written to me, how is this?

I had the great pleasure to see Luis on his way to Greece &

from him I heard of your well being, but I crave a particular account of all my friends individually

My twins I have lost—Eleanor ² is married & Arthur just going to be & so I am now alone & just the same as when you left me—the Marriage of Cana not quite finishd as *I* have been nearly finishd with a severe attack of rheumatism, both my hands & feet but after 4 years I am now well recovered

The siege of Rome took away my Italian consulate & half my income & when the Capital come ³ I shall lose the other half unless the F. O. indulges me with a pension,⁴ but all my six children are married so I have only to think of myself which I assure you is rather an odd task for [me] as I have always been thinking of others & *never of myself* the task is a novelty *but irksome* for I always feel a longing to have some one to bestow my good will upon ⁵

Also now in the change of Rome I have no longer political prisoners to interest me in getting their release which was an object of great interest to me, in these 10 years I had succeeded in liberating 130 respectable persons

So now you'll all consider me as a very dull personage & that I am no longer worthy of a visit from any of you & yet I live in hopes that the charming association of such friends & on such an occasion, may some day be repeated, who knows how or when?

I trust you will write me a longer letter & say how is dear Mr Llanos & my brother brush Giovanni how Rosa & the Countess—Then Brockman I trust to hear is well set up in health again & doing the Banker ⁶ in good style—then you must inform me of the dear granchildren & how tall they are

I remember when you left the Acqua Marcia was in its infancy—it is just now completed, the pipes are being laid down all over Rome & I have 50 Shares *not yet paying!!* but there is good hope that it will be a good spec ⁷

The poor Pope has shut himself upon the Vatican & *will* be a martyr tho' as yet not quite successfull for the King *assumes* to

treat His Holiness with great civility, but he will have none of it & *if* the King comes he will find the Vatican *shut* against him. What a strange state of things, but the Roman people like the change as they get back all their *numerous exiled relations*, this alone is a great matter against the Papal gov^t

This year there are very very few English ⁸ to eat up all the nice things & I had a fine woodcock yes^{dy} for one shilling! 'Tis said that the Italian gov^t is glad at this for the Romans in idleness lodging letting had caused great dearness in everything, now they'll be obliged to take to industry & cease to live on their wives & the English—All kinds of commerce & trade is now springing up & Rome *ought* to be the richest country in the world as nature has been so bountifull, but will it ever be? can any work be ever ⁹ got out of these lazy bones?

My position is still pleasant if I don['t] die of "nothing to do" if I am able to assume the "*dolce fa[r] niente*" which I find very hard work my two good Secretaries are still with me & are greatly devoted to me as well as all about me—I shall soon get some of the new married couples—think of six weddings in my family

You only write "Madrid" so I will direct this to Sig Blanco, for I am afraid of losing you again tho' Luis assur'd me that I had got your right address—With my sincere love to all your charming circle beleive me

Your affectionate f^d

Joseph Severn

¹ Embossed address.

² Born in 1841, she married Henry Furneaux, Fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford, in May, 1870.

³ Pope Pius IX had surrendered Rome on September 20; it became the capital of the new kingdom of Italy on July 1, 1871, and the king, Victor Emmanuel, entered the next day, taking up his residence at the Quirinal Palace.

⁴ On his pension from the Foreign Office see p. 94, below.

⁵ See his statement on p. 85, above, and p. 95, below.

⁶ See p. 84, above.

⁷ See p. 83, above.

⁸ John Murray's *Handbook of Rome* (1875) says that in 1870 there "were only

457 resident Protestants" in Rome, and the number of English people must have been much smaller.

^o *Written every.*

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JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

24 February 1871

Envelop addressed: M^{rs} de Llanos/ Calle de Lope de Vega N^o 61/ Madrid/
J. Severn

Postmarks: ROMA 8 S 24 FEB 71; PD; T{U}RINO 6 R 26 FEB. . .

BRITISH CONSULATE. ROME ¹

Rome 24 Feb. 1871

My dear M^{rs} de Llanos

Yest^y I answerd your telegram "that Horace Flacchi lives at the Consulta Monte Cavallo" ² & I hope you received it

My answer to your kind letter of the 23^d ult has been delayd on account of immensity of care caused by ³ the frigh[t]full inundation which now begins to be passed over the poor Romans having received in kind (new) all that they had lost—My country people, few as they are gave 10 thousand fcs; indeed the charity has ⁴ abounded & the Roma[n]s behaved really well under their affliction ⁵

You ask who the Lady is my dear boy Arthur is about to marry? She is Miss Joan Agnew a ward of the famous John Ruskin the great Art Critic & I have reason to be much gratified, not only as he bestows a charming & well to do Bride on my Son; ⁶ but also as he considers Arthur a great genius & another Turner

Have I not been happy in my dear children altho' I am now left alone—yet soon no doubt I shall have dozens of grandchildren tumbling aye & perhaps great grandchildren!! for my eldest granddaughter is now 17

It seems that on the Capital in June coming to Rome ⁷ that

my poor [pension] will be swallowd up, but on good authority I shall get a pension if M^r Gladstones "cutting down" will admit of it

I am glad to tell that I am not only well recovered but "groun'd so young" that all the Anglo Roman world is going to my Tolfa⁸ to be ground also & I confess to you that I have not wrinkle or frown, but I dont know how to turn my "looks" to account for this is the 50th year since I came to Rome with your illustrious brother!!!

You dont mention my dear & gifted friend Rosa, do tell me about her & her splendid music which still is running in my memory so charmingly—How often I feel the loss of you all for you most indulgently made me as one of yourselves—You'll remember Miss Novello,⁹ she is now staying with me & has a most dear recollection of you all & begs to be most kindly placed in your memories & I the same with the hope that we may still meet in dear old Rome altho it is now going thro such queer transformation—What will come of the two kings in the *one* city? ¹⁰

Yours affectionately
Joseph Severn

¹ Embossed address.

² The Palazzo della Consulta on Monte Cavallo in 1871 was attached to the Quirinal Palace for the use of the court.

³ *Written* but.

⁴ *Written* has has.

⁵ S. W. Halperin, *Italy and the Vatican at War* (Chicago, 1939), p. 146: "On December 27 [1870] the Tiber rose and flooded half of Rome . . . The destruction of life and property horrified the entire country, and aid for the destitute was at once organized on a national scale."

⁶ Joseph Arthur Palliser Severn (died February 23, 1931) married Joan Ruskin Agnew (died June 27, 1924), cousin and ward of Ruskin, in 1871.

⁷ It came on July 1: see p. 90 n., above.

⁸ That is, to the baths of Tolfa, twenty miles from Rome. See pp. 94, 100, below.

⁹ Emma Novello, a daughter of Keats's acquaintance, Vincent Novello. A letter of hers to Mme. Llanos is in the Paradinas collection.

¹⁰ Meaning the "imprisoned" pope, Pius IX, and the king, Victor Emmanuel.

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JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

9 May 1872

Address: Madame Keats de Llanos/ Calle de Lope de Vega N° 61/
Madrid/ J. Severn

Postmarks: ROMA 10 MAG 72 10 M; PD; TORINO . . . 11 MAG 72
10 ½ 8; MADRID (1) 15 MAY 72

Rome 9th May 1872

My dear M^{rs} de Llanos

I crave pardon for my tardy answer to your last letter—but I have lived in such a continued turmoil with the breaking up of my Consulate & the striving for a pension & so on, that I have not had courage to write till now

First I will answer your questions—as regards the invention of Count Brockman for the bridge twixt Dover & Calais & if I can give him introductions to further this object: I beg to assure him that my Son Walter will do any thing & every thing He is in the Privy Council office & I trust the Count may remember him

Next if I met your Son Johns friend and s[c]hoolfellow? he paid me a visit & I was much pleased to hear news of you all from so excellent a person, but I dare say before this he must be returned to Spain

And now about Rome—'tis indeed changed for an inundation of Italian strangers have helpd to double the population & every place of profit has fallen into their hands—the stately Roman is beat out of the field—Rome is filld with fine shops that seem almost ball rooms so that the dear old place you'd hardly know again The Italian Bible is selling in the streets, bound gilt & letterd for a franc Newspapers are hawked about all day the houses have doubled in their rents & every thing

increased in price *three fold*—how the poor live I cannot guess

The good things are the numerous schools & tis interesting to see how the Roman children *devour* education—in this I see the downfall of the Papacy—There is no end to building

As regards myself I am still in the same house or rather in the part looking over the fountain of Trevi, all the rest is let & the large saloon is occupied by the Archaeological society,¹ in this I was so fortunate as to “sot me down” rent free—My pension is a scanty affair £140 a year,² but I have my painting to fall back upon—The severe attack of rheumatism I have had for 7 years has made my painting languish, but I am now well cured, tho’ my hands are sadly “out of drawing”—Now that all my children are married I am left somewhat alone & feel at times my loneliness irksome, indeed I thought of returning to England to be in the midst of my children & granchildren 16 in number, but the Doctors assure me that one English winter would cripple me for life for I cannot stand damp or cold

How I wish you & Mr Llanos would come & take part of my house with me & let us begin again “da capo” for those happy days we passed together I am always dwelling on & more so now

Sir Augustus Paget an English minister is here ³ but the Pope wont receive him—I often hear dear Rosas music in my memory & the singing of the charming Countess, then John & I communicate on painting

My picture of the marriage of Cana is not quite finishd, but wanting but little, it gets me great praises & certainly rewards me for the immense labours I bestowd up[on it.]

I am just expecting my son Arthur & his Bride with a party of 8 friends, they’ll stay only a fortnight!! during 6 summers I have been to a mountain town (Tolfa) for the baths, ’tis 12 miles from Civita Vecchia

With my sincere love to all your party not forgetting your dear granchildren I remain your

sincere f^d Joseph Severn

Lord Houghton is producing a splendid edition of the life &

works of your illustrious brother ⁴ & I am expecting a Photo from America ⁵ from a drawing of mine ⁶

¹ See p. 87, above.

² £80 was his official Foreign Office pension, £60 came from the Civil List.

³ Paget was ambassador to the new capital.

⁴ *The Poetical Works of John Keats. With a Memoir* (revised edition, London, 1871).

⁵ Probably from Emma Keats (Mrs. Philip) Speed or her son, John Gilmer Speed.

⁶ This postscript is written at the head of the letter.

»» 35 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

28 May 1873

Address: To/ M^{rs} Keats de Llanos/ J. Severn/ by His Excellency ¹

Rome 28th May 1873

My dear M^{rs} Llanos

'Twas a joy to me meeting Lewis & to hear of his present appointment, which if it ² endures & he remains he gives me hope that you may all return to old Rome once more—Altho' I confess that I am comfortable this would complete my happiness

I dare say you know that I am no longer Consul & that I am "giubilato"; so now I have to tell you that I am in the strange position of having only to think of myself which to me is somewhat odd & even uncomfortable ³—all my 6 children are married & well doing in England & I should have had nothing but my rheumatism if I had not been so lucky as to get rid of it

You & I may now count up our granchildren you with five & I with eighteen but you have the advantage of seeing yours every day whereas I have only seen two of mine as yet & scarcely know when I shall get a visit from the rest

Eleanor has a son & daughter & Arthur a daughter only—these my twins are both most admirably married, indeed I

may say the same of all the others & I assure you that I feel myself to be really fortunate in thus (tho' a poor Artist) having been enabled to do so much for my dear ones

I am still in the old Poli but the Prince my Landlord has now divided the Palace, made me a new & easy stair case at the Sala ⁴ Dante & so that ugly tiresome old entrance I have done with & the rooms over the Fountain of Trevi I have let to the Philodramatic Society who are making a fine Theatre,—they took me by surprise with such a liberal offer that I am *actually now rent free*

You'll think of me in my loneliness but this also has come to an end for my good Doctor of Tolfa with his wife & sister ⁵ are now keeping house with me & so I am very comfortable & well lookd after for even this last may be essential as this year I shall be in my 80th year!! but as yet I dont show any sign of decay & am so possessed with a youthfulness of soul that as I was a great invalid in my early days; so now in a certain way I seem to be enjoying my youth

The rheumatism of which after 7 years fighting I am right well cured, has not left any ugliness except my hands being *sadly out of drawing*—but I can paint & write & do every thing except my piano forte playing which I assure you is very so so Lewis gives me a good account of you all even to your Vineyards—that Count Brockman is quite recovered & dear Rosa brilliant as ever at her Music

I never pass up the Via Gregoriana ⁶ without seeing you all in my minds eye & thinking over the many charming days & evenings I have passed there

Nothing like the same tranquility have we now, for Rome is risen up into the busy world & is just now doing away with the 400 Monasteries & Convents by a Parliamentary vote of 196 against 46 what a changel!!! & what will it come to? ⁷ I cannot beleive it yet as I am so used to the old state of things—L^y Castle Stuart ⁸ is still up at Monte Maria & is the only Roman Antique unchanged

With my love to all your circle beleive
Yours Sincerly,
Joseph Severn

¹ Probably sent by British Embassy mail.

² Apparently ift.

³ See pp. 85, 89, above.

⁴ One might suppose it to be the Sala di Dante (Sala Dantesca), behind the Fontana di Trevi, a large hall, decorated with subjects from the *Divine Comedy*, for concerts and other entertainments. But on August 5, 1877 (see No. 37), he gives his address as "Scala Dante," and Birkenhead, p. 230, remarks: "You entered the huge Palazzo Poli and climbed the steps of the Scala Dante."

⁵ The Valerianis. The sister, Margherita, died in March, 1875; the doctor Severn made one of the two trustees of his estate and the recipient of all his Keats manuscripts (Birkenhead, pp. 233, 235).

⁶ A street leading to the top of the Spanish Steps.

⁷ A change not mentioned in S. W. Halperin's *Italy and the Vatican at War* (Chicago, 1939).

⁸ See pp. 80, 83f., above. Since her father married in 1805 and died in 1809 she was probably around sixty-seven years old.

»» 36 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

15 July 1873

Rome 15th July 1873

My dear M^{rs} Llanos

Yours of the 11th inst^t brought me much charming intelligence & very dear enquiries

I confess I was most agreeably surprised at seeing dear Luis & at his splendid position but I regret that he seems not well establishd in it as you anticipate in your letter but yet I hope some good will come of it when the Spanish gov^t is well set up—But there is such an ugly fashion sprung up for confusion

You kindly enquire who my dear Eleanor married—A M^r Furneau,¹ a great Oxford Rev^d—she has two children & has made a very favorable & happy marriage

Arthur also the like, he is married to a Miss Agnew & pursues his painting tho' I'm afraid he is too comfortable to make much of it, for in addition to his Wifes fortune the late Duke of Bedford ² left him an annuity all this is very bad for an artist but as he has very fine talents perhaps he'll do well

You will be pleas'd to hear that I am once more *actually* at my darling pursuit & have done two pictures since I last wrote you ³

The other day I had the pleasure to dine with Louis & his nice wife at the Palaz Spagna ⁴—I was delighted with them both, but Louis has always been a great favorite of mine & I cannot but think favorably of his future for he seems born to fortune

I regret to hear that dear John (my brother brush) does not do much, but I fear that in the midst of so much political hubbub his mind is disturbed

My hope is greater inasmuch as Louis succeeding, you and Mr Llanos may come again to Rome

The Acqua Marcia is going on well in every thing, except paying interest ⁵

Yours Sincerely

Joseph Severn

My warm regards to all your dear ones

¹ Really Furneaux: see p. 90 n., above.

² William Russell (1809–1872), the eleventh duke, a complete recluse, whose personality was under £600,000.

³ He can hardly mean since May 28. One may have been "Isabella and the Pot of Basil" (see p. 100, below), which on September 24, 1874, he referred to as "my new picture" (Birkenhead, p. 231). The other may have been one of his numerous pictures of Keats.

⁴ The Palazzo di Spagna, on the west side of the Piazza di Spagna, had been the Spanish embassy since the seventeenth century.

⁵ See p. 85 n., above.

»» 37 ««

JOSEPH SEVERN TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS¹

5 August 1877

Envelop addressed: Madam Fanny Keats de Llanos/ 5 Calle di Lista/
Madrid/ J. Severn Rome

Postmarks (imperfect): ROM . . . FERROVI . . . 6 8-77 6 S: MADRID
(1) 10 AGO 77

Rome—Scala Dante

5th August 1877

My dear Madam de Llanos

It is a joy to me to get a letter from you for we have been so long separated by wars & revolutions that I imagine you had a heap of trouble

Your friend J. I. Vilar *did* come & I had the pleasure of an hours chat with him & he gave me your new address²—I had also heard of you & yours from the Sect^y of the Spanish Embassy who informed me that your Louis was about to visit Rome again, *but as you do not mention* it I doubt it. Also you [do] not tell me about dear Rosa

My painting languishes a little no doubt owing to my 84 years, yet my eyesight is excellent and³ my hand steady & *my impudence is great*, my marriage of Cana is just done after 10 years,⁴ but as I have suffered severely at times from rheumatism; so I have been much interrupted & now I look at the picture with wonderment & delight that I could have gone on with it to the end—dear Rosa⁵ is still the best figure amongst the 20

Another draw back has been the malevolent attacks at me as Consul, even to killing me of—but I had more talent than any of them & as I never lose my temper, they were defeated, these 6 Englishmen—now that there is an Ambassadors I have 2 pensions (I put one in each eye) & am very comfortable keeping house with an excellent Doctor & his wife—but my Poli has been cut in half & I have a good stair case

I took 75 baths of the Tolfa boiling spring & so I am well set up

Just now I am beginning a life size portrait of the illustrious Poet ⁶ & I receive continued communications ⁷ about him—His fame is much [*illegible word*] & last year Gen Sir Vincent Eyre erected a new tomb to his memory ⁸

But to your interesting request, that I would strive for a pension for you, this I will do with all my heart but M^r Gladstone not being in office I think there is difficulty but I will also try Lord Houghton ⁹

My children are a great happiness to me & sometimes visit me, I have 25 granchildren Eleanor has 3 & is really well married & the same of Arthur who has also 3 children & is very successfull as an artist, indeed I am very happy in my children, but I lost my gifted Mary & also Claudia

How glad I am that you have 6 granchildren but I am grieved that you have to mount 4 pair of stairs ¹⁰ because I remember you were weak in your knees & it must be hard for you

That your Leopold is director of a railway ¹¹ I am not a little glad

Do tell me about dear John, is he able to pursue his art? I am afraid not—There are here pensioned Spanish students greatly distinguishing themselves

I conclude with assuring you that I am very comfortable, & beg to be most kindly rem[em]bered to M^r Llanos & all your dear ones

beleive me yours very sincerely

Joseph Severn

PS a picture of Isabella & the pot of Basil I have just done

¹ A reply, in a very shaky hand, to Fanny Llanos' letter of July 27 printed by Sharp, pp. 252f. On "Scala Dante" see p. 97 n., above.

² Fanny wrote that "a Spanish friend of ours . . . tells me that he called upon you; but had not the pleasure of seeing you, as you were at the time taking your siesta."

³ *Written any.*

⁴ Or rather fifteen years: see p. 80, above.

⁵ See p. 84, above.

⁶ "His last picture was of Keats" (Birkenhead, p. 236).

⁷ *Apparently* communions.

⁸ Eyre merely restored the old tomb (1875) with money sent him by Mary Frere, of London, and Emma Keats Speed, of Louisville. He also raised further money to place a marble medallion of Keats (1875) in the Protestant Cemetery, Rome, and a marble tablet (1879) on the wall of the house in which Keats died (*KC* II, 342f., 355-357, 369-371). See also p. 105, below.

⁹ See p. 100, above. On the outcome of Houghton's and H. B. Forman's efforts to get a pension for her see Adami, pp. 190-196.

¹⁰ In her letter Fanny said, "We have unfortunately gone down in the world, and up to a fourth floor" (5, Calle de Lista).

¹¹ Count Brockmann had recently been made Director of the Railways of Jerez and Sanlúcar. He died in 1878 (Adami, p. 176).

»» 38 ««

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE TO FANNY KEATS DE LLANOS

12 February 1878

76. Sloane Street. S.W.¹

12 February 1878

Dear Madame Llanos

Not being quite sure of your address I write to you in this Post by duplicate sending one letter to an address which has been given to me, and one through my friend the Spanish Minister.

A Mr Forman has published, very much against my wish, those of the letters which he has (not those which I have)² which passed between your Brother John and Miss Brawne. On hearing from you I will if you like send you a copy of the publication through the post.³

You have I believe a portrait of your Brother by Severn. Could you very kindly describe to me its size & attitude and whether it is in water colors and on ivory. Also whether it was painted by Severn from your Brother or painted from one of

the others after your Brother's death. I have the one which was painted for Miss Brawne, and two copies from it. ⁴

Y^{rs} very truly

Charles W. Dilke

¹ Embossed address.

² A very interesting remark. Later he wrote (Stephen Gwynn and Gertrude M. Tuckwell, *The Life of the Rt. Hon. Sir Charles W. Dilke* [London, 1917], II, 543): "About this time (1878) Mr. Buxton Forman announced for publication the Keats Love-Letters, which I certainly thought I had in a vague way bought for the purpose of preventing publication. They had been long in my possession, but the son of Fanny Brawne had claimed them, and I, having no written agreement, had found it necessary to give them up—although what I had bought and paid for, unless it was the right to prevent publication, I do not know." The remark above makes it clear that Sir Charles did *not* surrender all the letters. Those he retained were in all likelihood among the Keats letters that his secretary, Mr. H. K. Hudson (see Joanna Richardson, *Fanny Brawne* [London, 1952], p. 169), saw him burn.

³ On March 19 he wrote to Mme. Llanos, "I have ordered a copy of the Keats love-letters to be sent to you." Forman also sent her a copy on April 30, and in a letter of May 9 (now in the Harvard Paradinas collection) he warmly defended his motives in publishing the book.

⁴ A photograph, made around 1890 by F. Holland Day, of the letter in which Fanny Brawne Lindon offered to sell this miniature to C. W. Dilke, is in the Harvard Keats Collection, and the original is quoted by George C. Williamson, *The Keats Letters, Papers, and Other Relics Forming the Dilke Bequest in the Hampstead Public Library* (London, 1914). The miniature which Sir Charles called "the only original and the only undoubted Severn" is now in the National Portrait Gallery. His two copies of it are in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and the Keats-Shelley House, Rome. See Williamson, pp. 99-101.

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EMMA FRANCES KEATS SPEED TO FANNY
KEATS DE LLANOS

7 April 1878

Louisville April 7th

My Dear Aunt Fanny

Through a paragraph in an English paper, I learn that you are ill and suffering; ¹ I am so grieved to hear it, and I hasten to write begging for information as to your health—If you are unable to write yourself will you get one of your children to do so—I am so drawn to you by the ties of blood that I feel an interest in all that concerns you and yours—I was unable because of sickness to go to the Centennial Exposition, thereby losing the pleasure of seeing my cousin's picture.² My son who lives in Philadelphia tells me that he showed it to some Amateurs in painting who spoke in praise of its excellence. I fear you did not receive my last letter, you have been heretofore so kind and prompt in your replies. Probably I failed to give the proper address. Having never beheld any kindred except Father and Mother and their descendants the desire to see you and yours increases with my years. I wish you would send me a photograph of yourself or of your children or of both, nothing would be more valued by me. I read a little sketch of your young Queen's school days, that she was your queen added interest to the article ³—I saw by the papers that you naturally disapproved the publication of the 'Keats Love Letters' ⁴ Since they were not published by his own family or with their consent, I do not regret, for not one of the letters fails to increase our respect and admiration for him, he seems, (to have) with his pure sensitive spirit to have detected the unlovely qualities of the woman, although he was immovably constant to the last—His death may have been to him a merciful release—I saw in a

picture dealers a very prettily conceived picture of "Isabel the pot of basil"—The engraving is a coarse one but spirited; I liked it so well that I bought it and it is being framed to hang up over the little miniatures of your two brothers. May I not have one of you to add to the group—My husband and children send love—We hope soon to hear of your good health. My address is '228 First street' Please give my regards to my uncle—

With respect

I am your affectionate

Niece

Fanny Keats Speed

¹ The *Athenaeum*, March 23, 1878, p. 383, wrote of Señora Llanos: "At an advanced age, and when her health is impaired, she finds herself reduced to poverty by unexpected misfortunes." It suggested that the Prime Minister grant her a pension from the Civil List.

² The Philadelphia exposition ran from May through November, 1876. According to the *Exposicion Internacional en Filadelfia de 1876* (Madrid, 1876), p. 111, Juan Llanos was represented by "Un cuadro al óleo."

³ Alphonso XII early in 1878 married Princess Maria de las Mercedes, who died six months later.

⁴ The *Athenaeum*, March 23, 1878, p. 383, said: "Madame Llanos . . . has written to her friends in England expressing strong disapproval of the publication of her brother's love-letters." See also Adami, pp. 182-190. Mrs. Speed later changed her opinion. She wrote to her Aunt Fanny on October 28, 1878: "Uncle John's letters were very very sad, but I think ought never to have been published—The publisher [Charles Welford?] wrote to me for information concerning Fanny Braun, and it seemed strange (to me) for I am told he is a cousin of that lady, who by the way, was not the least fitted to have been the companion of John Keats with his ardent sensitive nature."

» 40 «

EMMA FRANCES KEATS SPEED¹ TO FANNYKEATS DE LLANOS²

25 May 1879

Envelop addressed: Madame Fanny de Llanos/ 5. Calle de Lista/ Barrio de Salamanca/ Madrid/ Spain*Postmarks:* LOUISVILLE KY MAY 28 11 AM; CARTER 12 JUN 7{9}; MADRID (1) 12 JUN 79Louisville May 25th 1879

My Dear Aunt Fanny

Just as I received your letter of May 2nd I was thinking of writing to our Minister in Spain to beg of him to find your whereabouts—your letter relieved my apprehensions. You ³ will not be surprised when I tell you that poor Mother is dead—She was laid at rest in our Cemetery on the 17th of April ⁴—Her death was peaceful and unsuffering—I went to Lexington to her—she was pleased to have me with her—she was attended by an excellent nurse, my sisters Alice and Ella and her husband Mr Jeffrey—I send you a notice of her death taken from the New York Sun ⁵—I noticed the little sum ⁶ which was given you by the Bounty Fund, it ought to have been a pension—I was very much disappointed, for a year ago I saw that it had been recommended to the Government—and hoped for something liberal—I will send you a pleasant notice of the ceremony of unvailing the tablet placed over the door of the residence of Keats ⁷—It provokes me that all the papers insist that the grave of Keats was restored by private subscription—A * friend of mine living in Rome attended to the work which was done at a trifling cost—I sent her the money and now have the receipt for it ⁸—Twenty five dollars of mine were still in my friend's hands, this money she appropriated for the tablet over the door—I love to hear of my cousins and of their children—of their studies, and of their cheerful efforts to assist one another—It seems hard

where the families are so small that the Ocean should separate them—I wish I might have pictures of my cousins they would be very precious to me, one of yourself would be placed with my most precious possessions—We have an English acquaintance here the son of an Ex Mayor of Liverpool who is well acquainted with Warrington Wood, the Sculptor of the bust of Keats; he promises to write to him asking the price of a plaster cast—⁹ I will let you know in my next all about it—I have one son living in New York who is employed on the New York World¹⁰—He is the only one of my children who is at all gifted; the others are sensible, nice affectionate and industrious—Please write soon—Fanny, Florence, and Tom send love to all of you—Mr S. desires his remembrances—

Your affectionate niece

Fanny Keats Speed

* Miss Clarke of Boston

¹ Mrs. Philip Speed.

² Who endorsed it in pencil: "Speaks of our family."

³ *Written* your.

⁴ Georgiana Wylie Keats, who married John Jeffrey on January 5, 1843, died in Lexington, Kentucky, on April 3 and, according to the *Courier-Journal*, was buried in the Philip Speed lot, Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville, on April 7.

⁵ See KC I, cii f.

⁶ Of £150: see Adami, pp. 194f.

⁷ See KC II, 355–357, 369–371.

⁸ According to General Sir Vincent Eyre, the money used for restoring the tomb was provided jointly by Mary Frere, daughter of the statesman Sir Bartle Frere, and Mrs. Speed (see KC II, 342, and p. 100, above). Ednah Dow Cheney, *Reminiscences* (Boston, 1902), p. 146, calls Sarah Freeman Clarke, "an exquisite landscape painter," "the only pupil of Allston," and tells how she left Italy to live (and die) in Georgia, where she founded the Atlanta Public Library and worked to help the Negroes.

⁹ Wood made at his own cost, not a bust, but the marble medallion of Keats that is placed on the wall by the entrance to Keats's and Severn's graves (see p. 101 n., above). Wood, whose studio was in the Villa Campana, near St. John Lateran, was famous at that time for his "Recumbent Eve" and for the heroic group, "St. Michael Conquering Satan," he had made for his fellow-townsmen of Warrington, Lancashire.

¹⁰ John Gilmer Speed (1853–1909), managing editor of the *World*, 1879–1883, who edited Keats's letters and poems in 1883 (3 vols., New York).

APPENDIX

JOHN TAYLOR TO JOSEPH SEVERN

6 February 1821

Address: Joseph Severn Esq/ Poste restant/ Rome

Postmarks: ANGLETERRE; CHAMBERY; F 21 137 (twice)

London 6 Febr'y 1821

My dear Sir,

The very distressing State in which my poor Friend lies, and in which his Illness plunges you, would at any time afflict me very sensibly, but I feel more than I can express when I hear that my precautions (which were only taken for Keats's advantage) have proved a Source of so great Unquiet as your letter to Haslam exhibits.¹—Surely my Letter which was sent off at the same Time that Dr Clarke was written to² must have miscarried, or it is unopened, or lying at the Post Office—You would have seen by it that all my Doubts [?] were so guarded from leading to your Inconvenience that except for a few Days suspense you could not be materially affected—I was afraid if all the money was to go away at once by one of my good Friend Keats's generous Impulses, he would have none left to depend upon.—But that being ascertained not to be the case all will go on as usual. The Bill will be paid on the day it becomes due which I believe is the 18th Inst—and Torlonia's will not only let you have the rest of the money, which I hope is done ere this, but you may further draw upon us for Fifty Pounds more (as I told Dr Clarke in my last Letter, and after that if necessary for 50*£* more still—Most earnestly do I pray to God to bless our dear Friend Keats with Peace, his Peace that nothing earthly can take away, and often do I wish that I was with you if it was only to relieve you from some of your Fatigues & Cares, but I should also try to pray with and converse with Keats, in the Hope of being enabled by those Means to render his Illness less

oppressive—You have been in a wonderful Manner enabled to perform all your Duties to him and they have been of the utmost Service to our dear Friend:—in this Thought you will find Comfort at a future Day which not all the happiness of your past Life can equal.—If Keats is well enough to allow of your reading to him I wish you would go through the Book of Job. He will admire it for its Poetry; but he will also, with his Spirit which so deeply searches, discern that it is a most important Lesson which it teaches us. When the Spirits of Goodness & of Evil presented themselves at the Throne of God, & the latter by God's permission was suffered to try Job, (t)he (latter) bore his afflictions with great Patience not even in his Heart raising up himself against the Judgment of God—no not though his wife would have made him impatient of God's Dominion, renouncing it as if it could not be, now that he was persecuted who had done no wrong.—More to vex & harrass him his 3 Friends all declared their Conviction that he must be a Hypocrite and secretly a Sinner, and advised him to repent that he might escape the Wrath due to wicked Men.—But Job made a Declaration of Integrity such as few could equal him in—& so far he did no wrong—But when he wishes to hear what the Lord could allege against him, when he desires to plead his Cause against the hard Decree of the Almighty Judge, arrogating to himself that he knew himself thoroughly & could not err in his opinion of himself; then God by the Voice of Elihu caused him to know the difference between the thing created & its Creator, & by the infinite Distance which he proved to be between them he shewed Job his Error. Then Job confessed that nothing can be pure in the Sight of God,—that nothing can maintain itself against his Power,—that the clay knows nothing of its own Nature compared to the knowledge of him who moulds it as it pleases him—He admitted the Impropriety of his Defence, & submitted himself & his Reward in a worldly sense was said to be great, but in a future State would be infinitely above Comparison with what was his Lot before he was afflicted.—I feel a strong & confident

Hope in God that our dear Keats will be blessed with Job's Reward—and if he could bear to hear the Story it might not only amuse but confirm his Mind.—

I requested (by a Friend) that Dr Clarke would provide you with whatever might be necessary, if Torlonia's withheld th{e} Money in Consequence of my previous Inquiry about the Bi{ll}—and I wrote to Dr Clarke stating it would be paid a for{tnight} since; besides my Letter to Keats of the earlier Date. I wi{ll} en}deavour therefore to persuade myself that you were not long in a State of Misery about this Business.—Do not let any of K's papers be destroyed ³—& be under no apprehensions respecting anything else.—Reynolds sent 50£ a fortnight since Did you receive it ⁴—you must open such Letters as those which you suspect are not from one only Friend of K's—Miss B.⁵

I saw a Letter from a Female Cousin ⁶ of mine in Cincinnati yesterday, who says that she has been at Louisville paying a Visit at Mr George Keats's—She describes them as very happy, living very comfortably, and only desirous of getting back to England as soon as they can make it convenient to retire from the Business he is embarked in—

I fear you can hardly read my writing—but the only Satisfactory Part of it, the assurance of the Bill being paid, & your consequent Relief from all Trouble on that head, with the Request that you will draw for 50 or 100£ more if necessary will be more sure to meet your Eye if I repeat it

Pray tell Dr Clarke that I feel very grateful to him for the kind Interest he takes.—Assure Keats of my Heart's sincerest Sympathy with him—and accept my dear Sir the warm though unavailing best wishes & prayers of yours Ever truly

John Taylor

¹ On January 15 (KC I, 195–200) Severn, who had drawn £150 at one time on Taylor and Hessey, wrote to Haslam, "To[r]lonia's—the bankers—have refused any more money—the bill is returned unaccepted—'no effects.'"

² This comment makes it probable that Dr. James Clark's letter of January 3, preserved only in a partial, unaddressed transcript by Hessey (KC I, 185f.), was written to Taylor or to an employee of his.

* Later Severn "sent the most valuable literary remains," not to Taylor, but to Charles Brown (Sharp, p. 108).

* On April 3, Taylor told Severn (Sharp, p. 100), "Reynolds, I find, did not send the £50 after all. I did not know that till very lately; he wrote [to me of his] desire Keats would draw upon him for that sum."

* See the identical warning about Fanny Brawne's letters that Brown sent to Severn on January 15 (KC I, 201).

* Mary Taylor, wife of Michael Drury (see p. 45, above).

➤➤ 42 ≡≡

J. A. HESSEY TO JOSEPH SEVERN¹

12 February 1821

Address: Joseph Severn Esq/ Post Office/ Rome

Postmarks: F 10[. . .] 2 21; CHAMBERY; ANGLETERRE; 3 MARZO

London Feb. 12. 1821

My dear Sir

The harrowing Accounts which you have sent us of the state of our poor friend Keats induce me to write to you in the hope, however forlorn it may be, of imparting something like comfort to him and you, if it be not too late. Would to God it were in my power to give him that peace of mind which he so much needs in this his hour of trial. Our poor friend enquires, you say, "why he cannot possess that cheap comfort which every fool may have"³—alas, my dear Sir, its very cheapness has been the stumbling block to him—yet it is cheap though of the utmost value, and as we have the highest authority for saying "ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find," let me beg you to urge him to *ask that he may have*. Has he ever prayed for Heavenly Consolation?—Does he pray for it?—It cannot be had without praying for, and O may God give him the heart to pray, and may He graciously receive his Prayers. But what, he will perhaps say am I to pray for?—for Pardon of his Sins, and for Acceptance through Jesus Christ—Alas, I fear this is a Name he knows but

little of—and I sincerely wish it were in my power effectually to introduce it to his notice. Our friend is too sensible, too wise, to suppose there is *no God*—or that God is not good—and being, as He is, all goodness, God must hate all evil. God has given us his Laws to obey, under Penalty of Punishment beyond what we can conceive—we have all disobeyed His laws, and rendered ourselves liable to that Punishment—God has also proclaimed his Offer of Pardon and of unspeakable eternal happiness, and He has prescribed the Terms on which alone he will grant it—Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God came into this world, took our Nature upon him, fulfilled the Divine law in his own person, and suffered Death as a propitiation for the sins of all mankind. By virtue of his atonement Pardon is freely offered to all who, repenting of their Sins, will pray to God for Pardon through him and by Faith in him. How simple, how beautifully simple is this System of Scriptural Truth which Infidels cannot or will not comprehend. A just God proclaims his Anger against all Sin,—a merciful God will pardon all Sin for the Sake of a divine Mediator. He that will seek for pardon thro' this Mediator, feeling his want of it, and believing in the willingness of God to grant it through Him, shall be freely pardoned—The Spirit of God will purify his Heart and Life, and make him fit for the enjoyment of Heavenly Happiness. O that our dear friend may be enabled earnestly and heartily to pray for this pardon, this comfort, this preparation of the heart, and may his passage out of this life be to a happy Eternity.

But you will say, Keats is too ill, too weak to be spoken to on such subjects, or to be reasoned with—it will agitate him too much.—My dear Sir, he is not too ill to be very unhappy—his time is very short—and a word in season may make him happy eternally—Were I sitting by his bedside I certainly should not read him the lecture which I have just written to you.—I should watch my opportunity, and when I heard his complaints would say, “My dear Keats, there *is* a God—*do pray to Him for relief*—he is *Almighty* and he *can* relieve you—he is *merciful* and he

will relieve you—he has *commanded* us to pray to him, and *he will answer* our prayers—he has appointed a *Saviour*, for whose sake he *will accept us*.”—A few words like these, affectionately spoken, and *marked with Sincerity*, have, I speak from experience, much more effect than reasoning—And when a man feels the insufficiency of this world’s Philosophy to make him happy, a word of Heavenly Wisdom is Heaven itself to his Heart. Do but get him to *pray*—to feel that *there may be some use* in praying—to utter *but one earnest prayer* from the heart and you may then have hope. “Lord be merciful to me a Sinner”—“Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief”—may bring down mercy and Peace into his Heart, and give him a degree of happiness which he has never yet known. For my own Part, so convinced am I of the truth of what I have been saying that I would not for worlds think otherwise—It has been my daily Prayer for poor Keats, ever since I heard of his Illness, that it might please God to enlighten his understanding and to change his Heart—I thought I could do no more—Yet this one expedient suggested itself—it occurred to me that I might possibly convey a useful hint to you & him, & that it might be blessed, humble as it is. But alas! it may arrive too late—my letter may find you mourning over the loss of your friend—if so, God grant, that he may not h{ave need}ed my assistance, but that a change may have been wroug{ht in his} heart before he left this world, and that he may have entered into that “rest which remaineth for the People of God.”

To you, my dear friend, the Scenes which you must have witnessed have been awful lessons—may they sink deep into your heart. You may not have thought much on such subjects before—they have been forced on your Notice now, and let me be excused when I strongly and earnestly recommend them to your serious attention. I am but a poor divine, and am perhaps going beyond my province in thus addressing you—but your affectionate attentions to my poor friend Keats have made me feel towards you as a *friend*, and with the freedom of a friend I

venture to address you. Think deeply on these things—Search the Scriptures and see if I have not spoken the words of Truth & Soberness—it is not Cant believe me. We cannot tell how soon you & I may need the same kind Offices which you are paying to Keats, and how soon we may be compelled to call in the aid of all our Religious faith for Consolation on our Death bed. O may our hope be fixed on that firm foundation which shall never fail us. You have seen that Worldly Philosophy will not support a Man at such an hour and as such an hour must come it is madness not to be prepared for it. May it be your happy lot, and mine, to meet it with composure, with hope, with faith, with Confidence—There is but one way by which we can so meet it, and may we be enabled to know and to follow it. Once more let me apologize for this long letter, and beg you to receive & understand it as it is meant—Make my most affectionate regards to my dear friend Keats—I wish I could entertain hopes of his recovery, but as that I fear is hopeless I hope to meet him in a happier world where sorrow shall be no more. You will not of course I suppose shew or read this to him as I understand he cannot bear to hear letters from his friends—but make use of it according to your Discretion and may a blessing attend it—Farewell, My dear Sir—may you be supported under all your trials & succeed in all your wishes

Believe me, very sincerely Your friend

J. A. Hessey

let me hear from you soon

¹ Sharp, p. 86, saw this letter and referred to it as "the kind of epistle one would expect from a clergyman of the most pronounced evangelicalism." Perhaps it was just as well that Severn received it almost two weeks after Keats's death.

² The third figure is blurred by the Italian date stamp: the postmark should be something like "F 107 21."

³ To Haslam, January 15 (KC I, 197), Severn quoted Keats's lament, "this last cheap comfort—which every rogue and fool have—is deny'd me in my last moments."

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J. A. HESSEY TO JOSEPH SEVERN

27 February 1821

Address: Joseph Severn Esq/ Post Office/ Rome*Postmarks:* F 21 154; CHAMBERY; ANGLETERRE; 19 MARZO

London Feb. 27. 1821

My dear Sir

I have undertaken to reply to your Letter of the 25th ult^o which you addressed to Mr Taylor ¹ as I wish to spare him the uneasiness which he feels, and the depression of spirits which he suffers, whenever he hears or speaks of poor Keats. He is himself in much alarm respecting his own health, some very unfavourable symptoms having shown themselves in him. He desires me however to thank you for writing to him, and he hopes you will continue to do so. He wrote to you about a fortnight ago ² to inform you that you might draw upon us in the usual way for One hundred Pounds on Keats' Account, as you will have so many heavy expenses to meet—This intelligence I hope has reached you, and has put your Mind at rest on that score—We saw your letter to Haslam,³ and were much concerned that you should have suffered such distress of mind, even for a day, but as we had received advices from Dr Clarke ⁴ of a date prior to that of your letter, informing us that he had done all that was needful at Torlonia's we knew that you would soon be relieved from your Anxiety—The only fear we had was lest Keats should know of your distress, and we cannot say how much we both are gratified that it has been kept from him. He is infinitely indebted to you for all your kindness to him. I hope he is still alive, and still sensible of it—Your going out to Italy with him was I doubt not a merciful appointment of Providence for his benefit—you have been the means of keeping him alive, and I hope the term which you have added to

his life has been blessed to his eternal benefit. I have always, even when I have heard poor Keats utter the most extraordinary and revolting opinions, had hopes of him—I always trusted that he would think & feel differently, and I cannot but still encourage the hope that you may have witnessed the change in his Sentiments, and seen its happy effect on his feelings—If it be so, how thankfully will he have acknowledged your kindness in saving him from the Effects of his Delirium—how will he have valued the little of Life you have given him—and how thankful will you have cause to feel that you have so rescued him. I hope my last letter ⁵ has reached you without any delay, and I much regret it was not written sooner, for though I should place but little confidence in the effect of any thing that I could say, yet a word of *truth*, however humbly expressed, may prove a word of Comfort to him that needs it.—Our poor friend needed it—O that it may have comforted him.—I can scarcely hope what I am now writing will reach you before our poor friend has quitted his earthly scene of trouble—Comparing the date of your letter with Dr Clarkes opinion of the probable duration of his Life I can scarcely suppose him alive even now—But if he should be still on this side of Eternity, O employ the time that remains in the only way that can benefit him—pray with him—pray by him—pray for him—and may the God of all grace & mercy hear your prayers & mine, and grant him pardon & peace through Jesus Christ. Do not start at these expressions—they come from my heart and are dictated by the earnest & anxious desire I feel for him—not for his life, for that is past hope—but for his happiness in that state of being which will never end. I write from my own entire conviction that nothing but Religion will bring a man Peace at the last & I trust you will bear with {me} when I venture to recommend my conviction to your {own se}rious Consideration also—I am very {very} sorry to hear of your own health having suffered from {your} attention to poor Keats—it is what we have long feared and we have been very anxious about it—Everyone here

feels the most intense anxiety and Interest in poor Keats, and every one who knows and values him feels deeply indebted to you for your Care of him—Your next duty is now to take care of yourself—after such a period of labour & watching you will want Refreshment & Repose—do not exert yourself too much at first, or you will seriously injure your health—and when you are sufficiently recovered to pursue your Studies I hope you will derive all the benefit you could wish for from your residence in Rome—Pray let us hear from you soon—If our dear friend is still alive assure him of our most sincere and affectionate regard—Your friend Haslam is very well & so, I believe, are all your friends at Hampstead—Farewell my dear Sir—Accept my best wishes, and those of my friend Mr Taylor, & believe me, very sincerely Yours

J. A. Hessey

¹ For this letter of January 25 and 26, see *KC I*, 202–205. ("F 21" in the postmark of Hessey's letter, as in Nos. 41 and 42, means "February 1821.")

² The letter of February 6, above.

³ Of January 15 (*KC I*, 195–200).

⁴ Evidently Clark's letter of January 13 to one Gray (*KC I*, 193–195).

⁵ Of February 12, preceding.

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